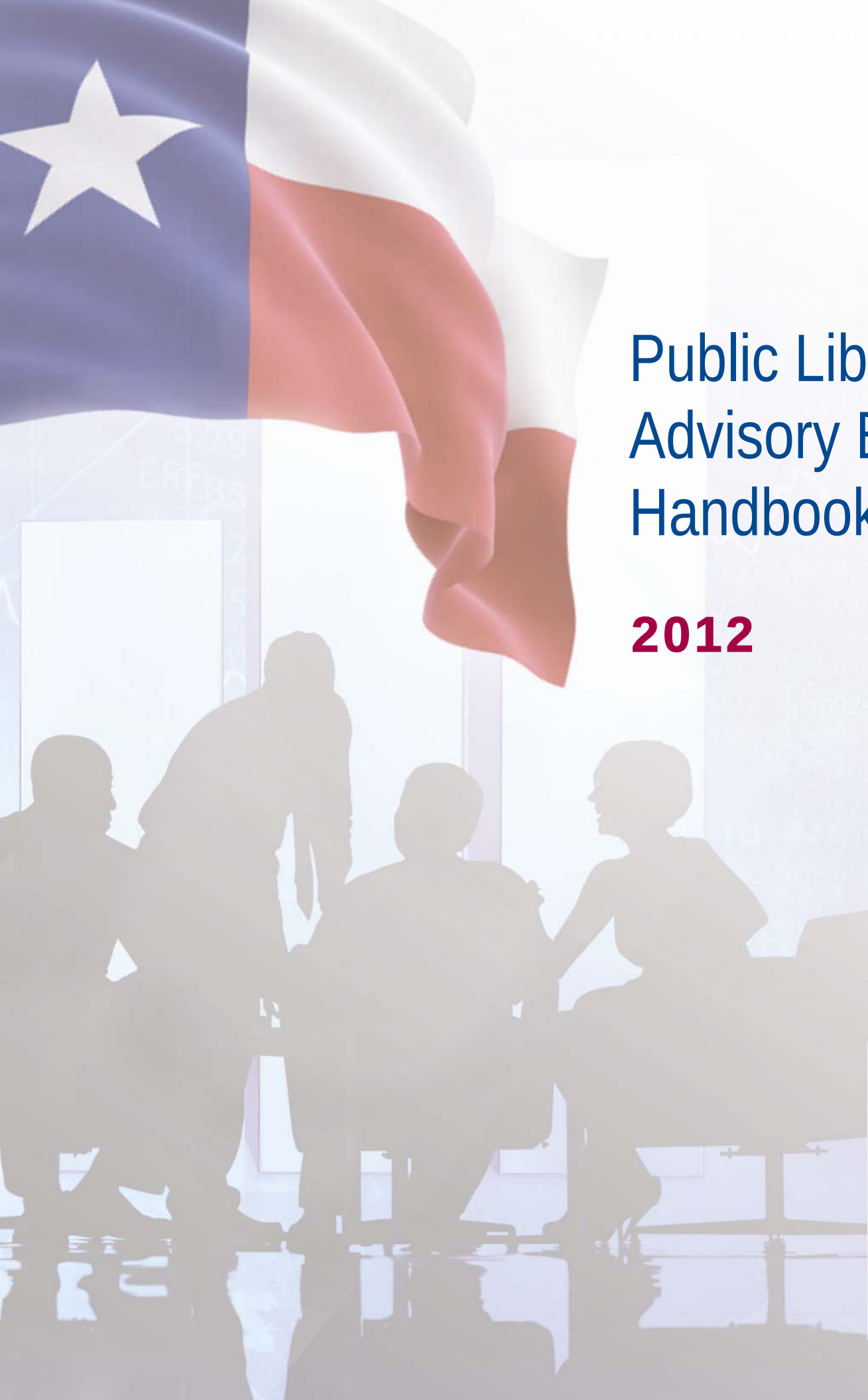

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Texas State Library and Archives Commission

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Message from Peggy D. Rudd

Dear Advisory Board Members,

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) recognizes the vital contribution that advisory board members make to the growth and development of public libraries in Texas. The work you do, the time and energy you contribute, and the knowledge and skills you share improve public library service for us all.

Public libraries face new and ever-changing challenges in meeting diverse community needs, including digital literacy, school readiness, lifelong learning, and workforce development. In addition, public library services must be measured and evaluated to meet public and political demands for accountability. Recently, one of your most important roles is advocating the library as a valuable community asset and as a center for public access computing.

Developed by TSLAC, this Public Library Advisory Board Handbook is a tool kit to help you improve your library. Not only will it help you understand the important role you play, but it will also enable you to evaluate situations and make informed decisions. It provides practical examples and best practices gathered from past advisory boards, as well as tools that can help extend your own capabilities.

We at the Texas State Library and Archives Commission are proud to partner with you in the effort to grow and develop public libraries in Texas. Thank you for all you do to help meet the needs of our Texas public libraries and communities.

Peggy D. Rudd
Director and Librarian
Texas State Library and Archives Commission

Acknowledgements

There is a variety of library boards working with public libraries today. They include, but are not limited to, governing boards (common in public library history), advisory boards, Friends of the Public Library Boards (Friends), boards for age-level functions (e.g., teen boards) and public library foundation boards. In addition, many public libraries are members of consortia, collaboratives, and partnerships, and these relationships often bring board activities and responsibilities.

One of the most important relationships, however, is the advisory board and public library relationship, which now exists in a large number of public libraries. Historically, the *Public Library Advisory Board Handbook* was in part a response to the evolution of advisory boards that emanated from the "Rise of the Council-Manager" form of government. Although there has been a great deal written in the last 10 to 15 years on advisory boards in the public sector in general, very little information is published on advisory boards in public libraries. The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) has been, and continues to be, committed to supporting public library advisory boards in Texas by maintaining the *Public Library Advisory Board Handbook* (the *Handbook*).

The *Handbook*, first published in 1989 and updated in 1998 by Public Library Administrators of North Texas (PLANT), was originally based on the collective wisdom of north Texas library managers who assembled experts from their group to design a handbook that met their needs and the needs of all public libraries in Texas (http://www.txplant.org/). It has well served Texas public libraries and their boards for over 20 years. This current revision includes the major categories of information from the first and second editions, new and updated information, and several new categories.

Finally, although there are few published monographs on public library advisory boards there are many advisory board documents and examples linked from library websites throughout the United States. A number of these documents are cited in an annotated resources list in the appendices.

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I. 21st Century Public Libraries

Public libraries, a sometimes quiet but always major force in communities, have been supporting their constituents for hundreds of years. In service to their communities, they provide a destination, resources and services for education, recreation, information, and culture. Many sizes and types of public libraries exist to serve all ages and populations. Public libraries support informal and formal, as well as lifelong learning. They excel in acquiring and organizing resources to meet needs and provide a unique balance of meeting changing needs by providing new, cutting-edge opportunities. Public libraries partner with other entities to expand potential and seek collaborative opportunities to maximize their support for communities. A major strength of yesterday's, today's, and tomorrow's public libraries is a vision for the future with a commitment to preserving the past.

Constant 21st century changes in the public arena, however, are forcing many public libraries to rethink their vision and mission as well as their roles and responsibilities in the community. Today's public libraries are struggling though still committed to their communities. They are restructuring their image and "re-branding" to reposition themselves within city and county government and community life. These changes emphasize their value, especially the economic value, libraries bring to their communities.

Today's Public Libraries and Library Staff

- Provide a variety of reference services and materials in a wide range of formats
- Teach patrons in point-of-use, in person, virtually, and in small and large groups in "classroom" settings encompassing a wide variety of ages, levels, and styles of learning
- Select, make accessible (in numerous formats), and create print and online documents, guides, and resources to meet patrons' needs
- Maintain all traditional, as well as 21st century, toolbox competencies for staff, including high-end productivity software and use of web-delivered resources
- Address education and training in hardware, software, teaching and learning, general management issues, and technology issues, such as hardware set-up, maintenance, and networking
- Maintain competencies, learning, and development in a continuous process
- Work virtually, digitally, and in person
- Count and track many more things today in a wide variety of usage categories, including books and periodicals through physical or in-person ownership, as well as access to virtual and digital information and materials delivered over the web

Library supporters are critical to the public library's success. Advisory boards, foundation boards, and Friends' groups are working with governing entities and library managers to better define or reposition the 21st century library as an ongoing critical community service. Public libraries in the 21st century must focus on the following: marketing their role in supporting small businesses and community enterprise; marketing their staff expertise as information specialists; involvement in and support for community workforce activities, such as job fairs, career information, green and/or sustainable programs/services; and the public libraries' significant role in the support of both informal and formal learning, which now includes a formal educational support role for both in-person and distance learning by their community members.

21st Century Library Roles

- Public libraries today aren't necessarily in new roles, but are emphasizing important community roles that include support for and services that enhance early literacy, such as parent and family programs and services for babies, general outreach to both parents and caregivers, training for child-care providers, school readiness, and academic success
- Public library locations assist in revitalizing community areas through downtown, central, or main street locations, mixed-use settings, commercial, or for-profit locations and joint or contiguous settings
- Public libraries provide critical small business support through access (in library or at desktops) to online subscription content with significant, vetted resources, rather than only broad, web-delivered content.
- Public libraries support and provide workforce development through access to the web, technology, information literacy training, as well as technology hardware and software training and adult literacy initiatives, such as English language training, career workshops, early reading initiatives, employment skills, job identification, and application support

One of the primary jobs of public libraries, library staff, and library advocates today is to make the case by explaining exactly what libraries are and what they do. Although all libraries have to "explain" who they are and what they do, often public libraries have to continuously reinvent themselves and often compete for local dollars. To "prove our worth" public libraries need to define why they exist in the 21st century economy.

What We Know We Can Say

- Libraries are public education.
- Public libraries are fundamental to public education and provide both print and online resources to inform and educate millions of constituents at every stage of living and learning.
- Libraries organize and offer resources for P-16 school curricula, provide business information to the thousands of self-employed and small-business owners; make available authoritative health and medical resources to support public need and the education of health sciences professionals; and help in just about every area of learning.
- Libraries support in-person and distance learners, including the casual learner building a deck for his or her home; the individual applying for a job or trying to learn new skills; the college freshman writing a paper; the researcher investigating quantum physics; or the child discovering the wonderful world of dinosaurs. In short, libraries make advancement possible.
- Library usage is at an all-time high in spite of those who think every answer can be found through Google.
- From the need for accurate and published digital content to technical support, from traditional learning materials to those expensive reference collections, only be afforded through public access, libraries are needed more than ever before.
- In the near future, libraries will play an even more vital role in linking people to government health and human services because many forms, applications, and basic information may soon be accessible primarily online.
- As most local, state, and federal government information becomes available primarily online, libraries will be one of the few places where those without access to computers or who need technical assistance will be able to access and get one-on-one help in using this vital information.

II. Public Library Advisory Boards

Most public libraries throughout the United States owe their very existence to the commitment and active participation of local community members who, through hard work and dedication, established libraries in cities, counties, and hometowns throughout the country. Providing more than "just fundraising" for many decades, these individuals volunteered their time and sought locations, identified and moved thousands of materials, donated, and, when needed, built furniture, rallied other community members, advocated appointed and elected officials, and petitioned for revenue streams. Many individuals, committed to the process and the results, have then become members and officers of library boards and Friends and volunteer groups.

Texas public libraries are commonly founded in this manner even today. This handbook recognizes the efforts of local and regional volunteers and advocates who have extended and continue to extend themselves on behalf of library service to their communities. It is designed to provide information and support to those volunteers and dedicated individuals who have championed libraries and then joined boards and support groups to continue to make a difference. The *Handbook* is designed to help library directors plan his or her own productive, rewarding collaboration with their boards.

The *Handbook*

- Provides background on advisory boards in general and those community service opportunities available in advisory boards
- Defines what a library board is
- Helps board members understand their positions in the context of current public library philosophy and practice in the United States
- Helps board members understand the context of a public library organization and practice in the state of Texas
- Seeks to explain board member processes to encourage interested individuals to join and participate in the important act of giving and providing service to local libraries
- Helps board members understand their roles and responsibilities as members and/or officers of the board
- Helps board members realize that they are part of a vast network of persons, institutions, and associations committed to the ideal that a democracy is most appreciated and best served by community members empowered by access to, and a free and independent pursuit of, information and ideas

Public Library Advisory Boards in Texas

Public libraries in Texas exist in a variety of settings. They can be a department of the city, a department of the county, and can also be, in essence, "both." That is, they can be responsible to both entities through a contract or partnership agreement. There can also be collaboration between another entity and a city and/or county. These relationships have included a public library in partnership with a public or private institution of higher learning. Furthermore, they can be an entity within a city or county. However, they can have their own taxing structure, based on a vote of the community, and thus their own revenue stream. Public libraries can also be independent, or 501c3 nonprofit entities, created to serve a community but exclusive to the governing entities of those communities.

In addition, if a public library wants to be accredited by the Texas State Library, then they must comply with the rules in the Texas Administrative Code, Title 13, Part 1, Chapter 1, Subchapter C, Minimum Standards for Accreditation in the State Library System, which contain the accreditation criteria for all types of libraries. Advisory board members should become generally familiar with the minimum standards here: http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/pls/index.html. See the Accreditation Rules link.

13 TAC §1.73 Public Library: Legal Establishment

To render general library services, a public library must be established as:

(1) a department of a city or county government by charter, resolution, or ordinance; or by contract as provided for in the Government Code, Chapter 791; or

(2) a library district established under the provisions of Local Government Code, Chapter 326, Library Districts; or

(3) a library district established under the provisions of Local Government Code, Chapter 336, Multi-Jurisdictional Library Districts; or

(4) a nonprofit corporation chartered by the Office of the Secretary of State for the purposes of providing free public library services; these corporations must have a current contract with each funding source (a city, county, or school district) to provide free public library services for the city, county, or school district.

However the library is legally established, a library is responsible to “someone.” Libraries within cities or counties report to the governing body of that entity such as a city council, city management, or county commission. Within a partnership, a library may be responsible to those structures that fund them, so they are responsible to a city, e.g., and the governing board of the higher education environment. A 501c3 public library will have a governing board over the library as a nonprofit “business.”

Typically, a public library advisory board is designated by the governing body (city, country, or other umbrella entity) as advisory oversight for the public library, that is, the library might have both a governing and an advisory group.

Advisory board members are appointed by the same governing body of which the library is a department or an agency. Just as the laws and ordinances under which the library was created vary, boards vary. In most instances, however, the advisory board serves as the liaison between and/or among the community, the governing body, and library management.

III. Library Advisory Board Requirements

Public Library Advisory Boards DO

- Advocate for library support, including seeking support for annual or operational and capital funding
- Advocate for support for the library for local, state, regional, and national legislative initiatives
- Promote library services and programs
- Assist library management in developing policies and budget proposals
- Provide support for management initiatives and decisions
- Advise their governing body on actions to take for the library

Because they are "advisory" only in nature, governing bodies have the ultimate authority and can accept, reject, or amend advisory board advice.

Advisory Boards DO NOT

- Govern the library
- Hire, manage or fire the library manager/director
- Hire, manage or fire other library staff members
- Make decisions concerning policies, budgets, hiring practices, salaries, and other library management tasks and issues

Governing structures may ask advisory boards for their input or opinion on several activities given the nature of their work with library management.

Advisory Board Activities

- Input on library management performance evaluation
- Information on advocacy initiatives
- Clarification on library policies (e.g., access, confidentiality)

Advisory Board's Work

- Attendance and participation in board activities and events
- Service in an advisory capacity to the governing body in matters that pertain to the library
- Serving as liaison and representative from the community on library matters
- Advocating for the library for support from governing entities
- Supporting public library vision and values, such as intellectual freedom and the right to access content

A complete list of advisory board roles and responsibilities appears later in this section.

Building and Sustaining a Productive Advisory Board

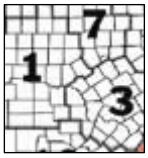
Planning for productivity on boards is a combination of the "right" board members being appointed, skillful orientation, nurturing board members, and training and ongoing development for board members. This process is built on consistent communication about the library that includes information relevant to their library from the professional literature, local information relevant to advising the library, and advocacy content to assist board members in successfully communicating the role of the library in the community. To sustain board membership, build a sound cohesive working team. To ensure that board members are "up to date," a sound communication plan is needed. More specifically, make it available to them in the appropriate modes and methods for maximum involvement.

The professional literature on nonprofit environments has much to say about successful boards. Clearly, an interest in, and commitment to, the community in general are the most important credentials for board service.

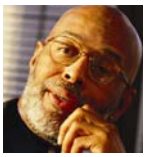
The literature also encourages organizations to, when possible given their umbrella organizations, communicate the need for boards to be both constituency and competency based. To this end, library managers should prepare a board profile for the governing authority who appoints advisory board members. This profile (often called a "wish list"), should identify interests and needs for the overall board makeup. It should also include definitions and explanations and outline the expertise of "retiring" or exiting board members.

Given the reality that many advisory boards are appointed by a variety of people and may be political in nature, it is important to communicate the value of, along with the interest and commitment of, constituency boards that can include:

Board members who represent the diversity of the community



Board members who represent or speak for community members by geographic location



Board members who represent or speak for target populations

When looking at "competency-based" boards, definitions should include knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes; seeking board members who have *unique* or specific knowledge and/or skills and abilities and/or education and training. These competencies would include, for example, expertise in management, general or community leadership, librarianship, public entity or government agency expertise, legal issues (specifically nonprofit legal expertise), a vision for, and commitment to, the library's vision and mission, funding or development experience, public relations and marketing, and experience with volunteerism. Additional competency areas include knowledge of the community as well as broad knowledge of and success in working in the community for other nonprofits, as well as successful entrepreneurial work and successful profit, business management.

For both types of boards, committee or project experience, productivity and specific attributes, such as values should also be considered.

Further, what makes a board productive, active, and engaged?

Board productivity for all types of boards and board members should also be identified very specifically to give board members a "real" look at what is needed by the library for active and engaged members. Tasl statements or job descriptions should take care to include *reasonable* activity levels for these committed volunteers. Productivity and activity statements should include a range of characteristics and requirements.

Productivity

- Attendance and activity in regularly scheduled meetings
- Willingness to assume a board leadership or officer role
- Attendance at library community events
- Participation in basic board communication during and between meetings and events and, in general, use of the library board communication plan
- Acceptance and activity in special projects

Activity

- Knowledge of and a commitment to promoting the libraries resources and services to the community
- Active participation in library and board processes, such as strategic and/or long-range planning and fundraising
- Activity in advocacy and political processes for local, state, regional, and national levels of legislation
- Library support such as local, annual funding requests, state advocacy for library funding, and state advocacy for state agency initiatives designed to support public libraries and local communities
- Assistance in identifying a network of community members to actively support the library

Characteristics of Successful Boards

- Board members who practice a division of board activities to use member expertise as well as to pace work and distribute the workload
- Board officers who complete roles and responsibilities, but who also use other board members for delegation and support
- Board officers who use communication plans and rules of communication and engagement to run meetings

Library directors should seek to create profiles of board preferences and styles.

Member Profiles

- Preferred modes and methods of board member communication *(Do you prefer email, fax, snail mail?)*
- Resources needed (Do you need to be paired with staff for their assistance in board activities? Introduced to community members with unique information?)
- Timelines for preferred communication (Do you prefer I communicate to you weekly? Monthly? And what time of day is the best time to work with you/provide you with information?)
- Information distribution for sharing information and knowledge (How long do you need to review documents before the board meeting, budget hearing, etc.?)
- Document style and preferences for learning/learning styles (Do you prefer a summary statement or executive summary at the beginning of the document? Should I use general terms and not use library terms or use them and provide a glossary? Would you like a legend of library terms included with each report?)
- Illustration of information for gaining knowledge, explanation, persuasion, and influence (Do you like charts and graphs? Pictures? Data only? Narrative? Technical writing? Personal or patron stories? Comparisons to other libraries? Other public entities? Do you like examples throughout the document? Past statistics? How far back should I go in comparing or presenting need?)

Roles and Responsibilities of Library Advisory Board Members

Advisory boards exist to advise, recommend, and advocate to the policy-making governing body, such as a city council, a city manager, or a county commissioner's court. In some environments where joint use or partnership organizations span policy-making entities, the advisory board may be reporting to (or advocating for) the library to more than one entity. For example, the board may report to a city council and a county commissioner's court. In this case, the county contracts with the city library for service for county constituents without library service.

Typically, organizations have general roles and responsibilities for advisory board members. While these statements can also be placed in a job description, finding sample job descriptions should be done with care as the majority of sample documents available are more for governing boards than advisory boards. While there IS overlap, samples should be carefully vetted to make sure roles and responsibilities, either by themselves or in a job description, are not governing or managerial in nature.

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Provide input and recommendations, as invited and appropriate, in support of the governing authority's interviewing and selection of the library director, library director orientation and training, and performance evaluation of the library director
2. Assist the library director in determining the library's vision and mission
3. Participate in short-term, long-term, and strategic planning
4. Advocate for adequate resources
5. Assist in managing resources effectively and efficiently by providing guidance and recommendations to library management
6. Be familiar with and assist the library in communicating around resources, services, and public image
7. Provide a forum for public communication on library issues
8. Assist the library in assessment
9. Report library activities and issues back to the governing authority
10. Assist in succession planning for new board members by identifying and motivating others to serve on the advisory board when slots become available
11. Maintain knowledge of existing and new community populations
12. Participate in processes to ensure effective board teamwork
13. Maintain a knowledge of contemporary librarianship through training provided by the xxxxx and the library and attendance at board meetings, committee meetings, other area community meetings, and professional association events such as the American Library Association and the Texas Library Association (annual, assembly and district meetings) whenever possible.
14. Be familiar with the library and its policies and procedures
15. Be aware of 21st century librarianship values and responsibilities such as copyright, confidentiality of patron records/data and the public's right to information versus intellectual freedom

Sample Job Description

Library Name
http://www.xxxx.xxxxx

Advisory Board
Community Name (City, County, etc.)

Library Vision, Mission

Position

The advisory board of the xxx Public exists to advise, recommend, and advocate for the library to the policy-making governing body, in the City of xxxx. The board supports the work of the library and provides leadership to the library director as well as leadership to the community regarding library services and resources. Although the operations are managed by the library director, the board-director relationship is a partnership.

Specific board member responsibilities include the following:

- Specific roles and responsibilities of board members
- The services and resources available in the library
- Governing authority reporting structure for advisory boards
- Community members (all service areas)
- Board processes, such as effective teamwork
- Local, regional, statewide resources, and/or other libraries near or contiguous to your service area
- Liability issues for advisory board members
- Serving as an advisor to the library director

Fundraising

Advisory board members may assist the library in development and fundraising activities that include assisting the library director, the library foundation board, or other groups by making annual gifts, by identifying potential contributors (e.g., individuals, foundations, organizations), or assisting in special projects, such as book sales and fundraising activities.

Board Terms/Attendance

Advisory board members will serve a xx-year term to be eligible for re-appointment for one additional term. Board meetings will be held (e.g., *quarterly*) and any board committee meetings will be (*e.g., held in coordination with full board meetings).* Board members must attend a minimum of xx board meetings to retain membership on the board.

Board Member Qualifications

Enthusiasm for volunteer service, commitment to a literate community, passion for the vision and mission of the library, and a successful track record of community leadership, including board leadership. Selected board members will possess (*specific competencies such as business acumen, finance, the law, knowledge of and or experience with area populations*). Personal attributes desired include integrity and credibility.

The xxx Library in the City of xxxx is committed to diversity and seeks board members who represent the diverse community.

Service on the xxxx advisory board is without remuneration. Board members may, however, be reimbursed for certain expenses, e.g., travel to and from meetings and accommodation costs not to exceed xxxx.

Educational Opportunities for Library Board Members

The most successful board members in organizations are provided with an extensive education, including an in-depth orientation and ongoing training and development throughout their board tenure. Board-member education, as all education, has changed dramatically in the last decade, and as more and more information is available electronically, and often ONLY electronically, it is imperative that board education change with new educational models and delivery systems. However, much of the educational process must be balanced to include the variety of delivery modes and methods that meet needs of diverse board members who may be technologically challenged or still more print-based.

Library directors should identify appropriate content, but spend as much time matching content and learning activities to staff learning styles and preferences. Directors should focus on active and collaborative learning techniques and activities and consider providing technology workstations in libraries where advisory board members can complete self-directed learning or learn with peers.

Although the primary responsibility for their education rests with the library director, others that should be included in the education process are representatives or designees of the governing authority, other advisory board members for the library (such as the Friends Board and any foundation board), workshops and programs from association meetings, and, as appropriate, staff members. Another effective educational process for board training is the identification and assignment of other board members as overall mentors to individual board members. If most board members are new or not able to mentor in general board activities, individuals could be identified to mentor in specific areas. This type of mentor assignment works best if boards have included competency-based member appointments.

In addition, library directors should provide board members with websites that will add both information and value to board education. These should include local government websites, state agency web content, state and national association web content, and related websites that provide background and updated information on relevant legal issues, information and data on libraries, library supporter websites, such as Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF) web information. While these websites provide a wealth of information, care should be taken to distinguish trustee or governing board content from advisory board content.

Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations ALTAFF
http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/altaff/about/index.cfm

Friends of the Libraries and Archives of Texas (FLAT)
http://www.texaslibraryfriends.org/past-events.html

Library Friends, Trustees, and Advocates Round Table (LiFTA)
http://www.txla.org/groups/LIFTA

Additional educational material can be found in the Texas State Library and Archives Commission's Library Science Collection: https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/lsc/index.html

Orientation

A critical element of education is an orientation for new board members. "Orientation" introduces or acquaints board members to initial content necessary to be successful for the first few months. Orientation is NOT a brief introduction to *everything*, but rather to a limited number of areas new members must be aware of immediately. Orientation differs from training and education in its content and delivery. It is typically the first step in education.

One technique in the educational process is to divide the orientation process into two phases. Phase I should be an advisory board orientation geared toward the first meeting, first month content, and communicating the top elements or activities taking place in the first board meeting. Phase II includes more in-depth content on policies, planning, and advocacy. Typically, chunks or packets of information are divided into the following categories and small group or one-on-one teaching styles are employed.

Training

Advisory board training critical to the success of the board includes technology training for general library technology (e.g., online catalog), training on communication tools used for board business (e.g., email, wikis, blogs), training in communication, such as presentation skills, advocating, media skills, negotiation, and conflict resolution.

Training can be divided into basic, intermediate, and advanced training opportunities. Although self-directed training may be necessary for some areas, the most successful training occurs in the context of work. In this case, "work" would mean board events, activities, and meetings. It follows that training board members would then be most successful when they are trained as a team.

Development

Development, an integral part of the educational process, includes teaching and learning opportunities where the content is focused on a change in attitude or values. Development for board members may include workshops on the values and challenges of intellectual freedom; advocating for library issues; library policies designed to support confidentiality of information; and codes, guidelines and standards for libraries, such as ALA's *Code of Ethics* or internet policies.

Just as *orientation* is planned to include certain content, *development,* or changes in attitudes or values, is best learned in settings that employ case, scenario, interactive activities, or discussion opportunities. Also, as in orientation and training, development is critical to the success of board members and is primarily the responsibility of the library director. Some would argue that after orientation, development is the most critical area for board training in order to prepare board members to be able to advocate for the library.

The Library Advisory Board Education Process—Orientation

Although orientation for advisory board members should be a required part of their educational process, it is NOT a brief introduction to *everything*, but rather to a limited number of areas new members must be aware of "now." A brief look at Phase I and Phase II highlights can be found in the following callout boxes.

Phase I

Each new advisory board member should receive a print or online notebook containing the following information:

1. Library vision, mission, and goals and a very brief introduction to resources and services typically accomplished through a library (behind the scenes) tour with an emphasis on people:
    - A copy of, or link to, this TSLAC Public Library Advisory Board Handbook
    - Board bylaws
    - Board member roles and responsibilities
    - Board officer roles and responsibilities
    - Names and addresses of other board members
    - Elected officials who form the governing authority over the library
    - Description of library programs and services
2. Communication processes between the library director and the advisory board and between board members and the timeline and calendar for board activities
3. Agenda of the first meeting with minutes from previous meeting

Phase II

1. Library information/content/data
    - Budgets
    - Staff information
    - Policy manuals
    - Promotional flyers and brochures
    - Past agendas and minutes
    - Friends of the Library officers
    - History of the library
2. Definitions for the board including what an advisory board does and doesn't do and how an advisory board differs from a governing board (trustees)
3. Administrative issues such as paperwork, board documents to form the core of educational materials for the first board year; goals and objectives for the coming year
4. Library policies that include basic or foundation policy descriptions
5. Library projects such as facilities upgrades, strategic plans, development issues, statistics, community profiles, collection plans and a current SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)

Liability of Library Advisory Board Members

Advisory board members typically do not participate in the governing activities associated with governing boards or trustees. That is, library advisory board members do not make policies for the library or financial or employment decisions. If advisory board business is carried out as policies dictate, by providing only advice and recommendations, then liability issues may not be a problem. Working closely with the library director, they may, however:

- Report on library activities and needs to the governing body
- Review existing, revised or new policies
- Assist with the justification, design and advocacy for the library budget proposal
- Advocate, in general, for libraries at the local, regional, state or national level
- Recommend a course of action to the library's governing body
- Recommend policy adoption to the library's governing body

Although these advisory activities do not constitute the type or level of decision that incurs liability for these public boards, the decision to contract for liability insurance should be made in concert with the governing authority. If the board is concerned about the issue of liability for actions made in the execution of board roles and responsibilities, members should ask the following questions of the Library Director, the governing body and/or their own insurance carriers.

Questions Members Should Ask

- In the event of a lawsuit against the advisory board, does the governing body's legal representation, represent the advisory board?
- Does any existing personal liability insurance a board member might have cover their advisory board work?
- Is there a recommended personal or individual professional liability insurance that might cover board activities?
- Will the governing body purchase liability insurance for the advisory board members?

Processes Advisory Boards Should Always Follow

- Identify the process for clear tracking and recordkeeping regarding recommendations made by the advisory board vs. decisions made the governing body
- Ensure that current, well-written policies are in place and that all policies have been approved by the governing body
- Follow all rules and regulations regarding Open Meetings and discussion and recommendations for board activities
- Ensure that advisory board documents include ethical statements for board behaviors that include conflict of interest and recommendations vs. decisions

The library director should take great care NOT to expose advisory board members to liability, but advisory board members should seek clarification if ambiguity exists.

Ethics Statement for Public Library Board Members

Over the years, a number of general or model behavioral or performance statements have been made available through the American Library Association (ALA). These statements have been designed for library board trustees or governing board members, but are applicable to advisory board members as well. The most recent ALA statement is even more general. As such, it is applicable for not only governing and/or advisory board members (officers and members), but also for library management and library employees. The policy can and should apply to additional individuals or groups, which include volunteers, Friends' group members and foundation board members. For example, this author has added "volunteers" to the statements as a category of people who should be ethical and sign "conflict of interest" statements. If libraries use volunteers, volunteers should be included in these processes, and in these statements. If they don't use volunteers, these categories should be excerpted.

Another area for editing these statements to meet individual library needs includes the inclusion of appropriate titles. For example, the term Executive Director is used and, in reality, is not often used in libraries. Exact titles of members and employees, etc., should be used.

The two statements that are provided in this handbook are interrelated in that a general ethics statement outlines general ethical behavior. An element of ethical behavior is awareness and avoidance of a conflict of interest. Both statements have been edited by the *Handbook* author to make them broader and more applicable to more individuals and groups.

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Sample Board of Trustees and Library Employee Ethics Policy

The Xxxx Public Library is dependent on the trust of its community to successfully achieve its mission; therefore, it is crucial that all board members, employees and volunteers conduct business on behalf of the Xxxx Public Library with the highest level of integrity avoiding any impropriety or the appearance of impropriety.

Guiding Principles:

- Board members and employees should uphold the integrity of the Xxxx Public Library and must perform their duties impartially and diligently.
- Board members and employees should not engage in discrimination of any kind including that based on race, class, ethnicity, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or belief system.
- Board members and employees should protect and uphold library patrons' right to privacy in their use of the library's resources. A trustee must respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of and in compliance with applicable laws governing freedom of information.
- Board members and employees should avoid situations in which their personal interests, activities, or financial affairs are, or are likely to be perceived as being in conflict with the best interests of the Xxxx Public Library. Situations must be avoided in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues, or the institution.
- Board members and employees should avoid having interests that may reasonably bring into question their position in a fair, impartial, and objective manner. It is incumbent upon any trustee to disqualify himself or herself immediately whenever the appearance of a conflict of interest exists.
- Board members and employees should not knowingly act in any way that would reasonably be expected to create an impression among the public that they are engaged in conduct that violates their trust as Board members or employees.
- Board members and employees should not use or attempt to use their position with the Xxxx Public Library to obtain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others.
- Board members and employees should not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure, or fear of criticism.
- Board members and employees should not denigrate the organization or fellow board members or employees in any public arena. Board members and employees 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.

Therefore: To preserve and uphold the Xxxx Public Library's reputation as an organization of unimpeachable integrity, each board member and employee will sign a "Conflict of Interest" statement and an "Ethics Statement" at the beginning of each calendar year (and at the commencement of his or her service) during their tenure with the Xxxx Public Library.

Compliance: If any board member or director appears to be in conflict of the "Guiding Principles" above, he or she will be asked to meet with the executive committee to discuss the issue. The executive committee will make a recommendation to the full board based on their findings. Employees who are, or appear to be, in conflict with the "Guiding Principles" will be asked to meet with the executive director who will make a determination as to discipline or termination based on his or her findings.

http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/altaff/trustees/orgtools/policies/ethics-1.doc

SAMPLE BOARD OF TRUSTEES AND LIBRARY EMPLOYEE

CONFLICT OF INTEREST POLICY

Officers, Board Members, and Employees

No board member and/or employee of the Xxxx Public Library shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her participation on the board or employment by or position in the library. Other than compensation, no employee shall derive any personal profit or gain, directly or indirectly, by reason of his or her employment by the Xxxx Public Library except through activities that may facilitate professional advancement or contribute to the profession, such as publications and professional service and have been fully disclosed to the Board.

Each individual shall disclose to the board any personal interest, which he or she may have in any matter pending before the board and shall refrain from participation in any decision on such matter.

Members of Xxxx Public Library Board and/or employees shall refrain from obtaining any list of library patrons that result in personal benefit.

Statement of Associations

This is to certify that I, except as described on the reverse of this sheet, am not now nor at any time during the past year have been:

> A participant, directly or indirectly, in any arrangement, agreement, investment, or other activity with any vendor, supplier, or other party doing business with Xxxx Public Library that has resulted or could result in personal benefit to me.

Any exceptions to the above are stated on the reverse of this sheet with a full description of the transactions, whether direct or indirect, which I have (or have had during the past year) with persons or organizations having transactions with Xxxx Public Library.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Printed name: _____

Xxxx Public Library position:

_____

http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/altaff/trustees/orgtools/policies/conflict-interest.doc

Best Practices for Advisory Boards

There is a growing body of literature specific to advisory boards. In general, the following six areas are identified as critical to the success of boards. Library Directors should create, share and seek best practices in the following areas:

1. Communication

Advisory boards must have an infrastructure of communication that provides content to create and then maintain knowledgeable board members for each board activity (meetings, events, and advocacy activities), but also for the work, which occurs between meetings, events, and activities for board officers, individual board members and for any board subgroups, workgroups, or committees. While many board members today are technologically savvy, many may not be. Effective or best practices must include a balance or hybrid blend of print and online content and communication to meet the needs of all board members.

2. Management Documents

Board content comes in many forms and goes beyond the initial Phase I and Phase II orientation information. Library directors must organize, label, and create a library of management documents for board members to reference throughout his or her board tenure. While most library directors create content that is given to board members for home or off-site use, there is value in creating a space within the library where board members can not only use technology, but also can store and reference management documents.

3. Vision/Mission/Values/ Goals/Outcomes and Workplan

Although the library has its vision, mission, and goals designed to guide the library overall, there is great value in using these documents as supporting infrastructure to create board goals, outcomes, and workplans. Specific goals and outcomes for board members assist them in identifying tasks, prioritizing their work and matching their work to what library needs and directions require. Building their goals and outcomes based on library goals and outcomes ensures an ongoing focus and increases the chances for board productivity. These directions and guidelines become content to use at board meetings and naturally become the jumping off point for reporting board activities back to the governing body.

That being said, another reason for creating separate board goals and outcomes is that some governing bodies have standardized forms for boards to use for communication in general or for reporting. Maintaining board content in these formats provides a shortcut to preparing reporting for governing bodies.

4. Calendars (Time Management)

The Management Document workspace, the communication process and plan, as well as the goals and outcomes workplan create structures that strive to make the most effective use of the volunteers' limited time. Maximizing delivery, availability, and techniques for keeping up save time and energy in both the short term (for example, director and board member preparation for each board meeting) and the long term (e.g., compiling, tracking, reporting board business for library reporting, and the board reporting to the governing body).

These timesaving approaches, which can be assisted by a master calendar for board business, are created at the beginning of the board work year. They include, as well as emphasize, not only due dates for the library, but governing body timelines, draft dates and completion dates for content needed, board member timeline issues, and any dates needed for the actual creation, printing, or copying of content.

5. Job Descriptions (officers, members, teams, etc.)

Boards function better with general infrastructure from the organization (management documents, calendars, board goals, and outcomes) and individual statements identifying roles and responsibilities. Job descriptions for the board in general, individual officer responsibilities, general board members, as well as descriptions outlining what subgroups, such as committees, might do are critical. In addition, special projects, as well as scripts for specific activities, should be created. These might include:

- Board member outline for attending governing body budget hearings
- Committee member outline for a nominating committee's annual meeting
- Existing board members' roles in orienting new board members

6. Recognition

Building and motivating groups of volunteers is an important part of a library director's job. These groups of volunteers include general library volunteers, organized, project or task-specific volunteers, Friend's groups, other board members, such as foundation board members, and advisory board members. An important part of motivating and thus sustaining board members is a system of recognition for service.

Just like productive employees and managers, productive boards take time and energy. Although board members "aren't in it for the glory" and certainly not for the money, a good library director spends time deciding how to nurture and inform the board. A key element of this is board recognition and reward for service.

Although service is rewarding in and of itself and many think it should be its own reward, library directors should make every effort to recognize board member service. Suggestions for rewarding public entity board service include:

- Providing board members support, as needed, to gather information, complete tasks by identifying functions needing support and pairing board members with individuals who can provide the specific support (Internet research, use of office productivity software, access to hardware, etc.) they need. (Resource people could include staff, volunteers, Friends members, previous board members, and current board members, as well as the library director.)
- Prominently displaying board member names and pictures within the library.
- Seeking display space in governing body offices (outside council chambers, commission newsletters, etc.) for advisory board membership.
- Seeking display space in the library's public area/environments for advisory board membership and service information.
- Providing a standard panel of pictures, names, and service information about the board for inclusion in all library informational and promotional materials.
- Advertising and highlighting the importance of board projects separately from service and including these activities in press releases to media.
- Seeking opportunities to use board members to lead or assist in introducing, kicking off library activities to recognize members, and service, as well as illustrating board support.
- Publicly thanking board members annually, but more important, and, as appropriate, at every library activity and opportunity, including library interactions at governing body activities.
- Offering library programs or presentations to board members when possible. For example, if an advisory board member is a Rotarian, then the library director might present an annual program on local archives and history to that organization.

Basic Board Business Processes

All groups need to identify those business practices that, when used, organize what they do and what they get accomplished through their group process. Advisory boards are no exception. Often, the way they work is different from how other boards might work because they are all volunteer boards. In addition, members may have different commitments to constituents or members or are providing recommendations on a "business" that is new to them. Finally, they walk a fine line of balancing recommendations with decision making. To this end, elements of board work should be reviewed to ensure these pieces are organized and consistently follow good business practices. Specifically, boards should choose and create, when needed, structures that include board meeting guidelines and meeting organization (agendas, rules and minutes), and focus on streamlining meetings.

Board Meetings

Meetings are the backbone of work activities for advisory board members. As such, it is important that meetings be well organized and make the best use of member time, as well as give staff, and the public, opportunities for dialogue and exchange of ideas. Although many advisory board members and library managers wish that the public took more interest in the board meetings, the burden falls on the board and staff to make sure that constituent voices are heard regardless of the attendance. Meetings should be scheduled at a variety of times to provide multiple opportunities for attendance. Meetings should also be in locations that are accessible to a broad constituent base, including both reactive scheduling, as well as proactive invitations for community member input. Boards and library managers should work together to increase feedback opportunities by designing "talk back" or suggestion boxes either on-site (internal and external to the library) or online.

Although Texas law requires governmental bodies to hold meetings that are open to the public, a 1974 opinion by the Attorney General holds that:

"A city's library board which acts solely in an advisory capacity and has no rule-making or quasi-judicial power is not required to comply with the mandate of the Open Meeting Act regarding public notice and open meetings."

Specific information for Advisory Board Meetings in the Texas Attorney General's Office Open Meetings 2010 Handbook

1. "A purely advisory body, which has no authority over public business or policy, is not subject to the Act, unless a governmental body routinely adopts or "rubber stamps" the recommendations of the advisory board."
   https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/openmeeting_hb.pdf, page 22
2. "A governmental body may hold an open or closed meeting by telephone conference call if:
   a. an emergency or public necessity exists within the meaning of Section 551.045 of [the Act]; and
   b. the convening at one location of a quorum of the governmental body is difficult or impossible; or
   c. the meeting is held by an advisory board."

   https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/openmeeting_hb.pdf, page 25, 95

Although the basic open meetings law does not change with any regularity regarding advisory boards, legal citations should be assessed annually for specific and related laws, library laws, and Attorney Generals' opinions. Also, some local city and/or county governmental charters require open meetings for all groups. Because some local governing authorities ask that ALL community board members take a service oath (which includes swearing to uphold the Open Meetings Act), many boards follow Act guidelines. In addition, most library managers and library board members feel that their deliberations are sufficiently important to the community to follow the spirit (and, in some cases, the letter of the law) for holding open meetings with prior notice. Notice may include posting formats, timelines, posting locations, etc. Finally, the more specific the guidelines are and the more consistently guidelines are followed, the more likely liability threats (whether a board needs insurance or not) are reduced.

Meeting Organization

Advisory board meetings should be well organized and well run to maximize the time of members, staff, and the community and to provide a systematic structure to capture discussion and information for overall public library support. While all meetings should strive to be welcoming and, if possible, fun experiences, the best meetings should simply be productive. Although advisory board bylaws provide structure, specific meeting planning ensures meeting rules, a proper agenda, minutes, and an overall streamlined format are achieved.

Meeting Rules

The best meetings are those with a choice of rules. Rules are important to provide a structure for scripted and unscripted parts of the meeting. Rules include:

- Choice of the structure for discussion to include a guide for parliamentary procedure, such as *Robert's Rules of Order* or *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure*:
  - *The Official Robert's Rules of Order Web Site* http://www.robertsrules.com/ *(Official site includes full information and summative charts.)*
  - *Parliamentarian and Parliamentary Consultant Jim Slaughter* http://www.jimslaughter.com/articles.htm *(Don't miss this best resource ever with links to full content of Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure.)*
- A discussion how the group will manage issues, which is formed on the choice of parliamentary procedures
- A decision on how the group will make decisions:
  - Groups may employ multiple methods to make decisions or recommendations. These include consensus decision making and voting on decisions. In fact, it is normal that a board may move between these processes if issues are controversial:
    - Consensus decision making is preferred for advisory boards. Reaching consensus for boards means reaching a majority opinion or decision through discussion that includes clarification, seeking opinions, and compromise. Consensus typically assumes that board members are prepared to cooperate. Often, the discussion facilitator may want to clarify goals, vision, and values of cooperation (i.e., what people should be bringing to the table). When the facilitator is trying to achieve consensus, board members will discuss topics until the discussion leader believes that all are in agreement. Although consensus may take more time to reach a decision, it provides a solid foundation for implementing decisions. Reaching a decision should not exclude the realization that some group members may not be completely on board but may "agree to disagree." It should be clarified for those members that while it is completely acceptable to do so, after the board moves forward and decides on a direction, board members not in complete agreement are on board with not only moving forward but supporting future activities regarding this issue. It is reasonable that not everyone will be comfortable with all decisions where board members are representing many constituents. In those cases, board members may have to provide support by keeping silent on the issue.
    - There is a strong possibility that board members will have strong opinions, and, if consensus is not viable, then board members may decide by voting. For voting decisions, rules of parliamentary procedure are adopted.

Meeting Agendas

Meeting agendas can follow a variety of formats, including using samples found in the Open Meetings guidelines, even though advisory boards are not required to follow these guides. Agendas should be consistently organized to provide a structure for recordkeeping. The board chair and the library director prepare agenda topics jointly. Agendas provide lists of topics and issues and the order of discussion. Other topics in agendas may include time estimates for each item, definitions of topics, briefings on background issues, and a designated topic discussion leader. If your library is requested or required to follow the Open Meetings Act processes by a local governing entity, then agendas must be posted at least 72 hours in advance of the meeting. The posting must follow a certain format and be posted in legally designated places. In some cases, those posting places must be approved by the governing body.

Sample Public Posting

- Official name of the board holding the meeting
- Address of the meeting
- Date and time of the meeting
- Certification or verification that the meeting was posted on a specific date and at or by a specific time
- Signature of a legally responsible person, i.e., an authorized administrative official, the library director, or the board chair

A well-planned agenda is essential. It allows for focus and sets the tone for the meeting. Additional meeting agenda tips include: identify process owners for follow-up needed on the agenda itself and a status list, which identifies issues on the agenda that have been on the agenda before and may have been held over, as well as a reason why. That is, an agenda item may have content added, which is brief, but says "item discussed for consensus on x date, but consensus not reached; therefore, the issue has been brought back for voting."

Sample Agenda Order

Agenda:

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

Public Comments

Discussion Items:

- Library Reports
- Marketing Group Report—Review suggestions for marketing library programs and services
- Director's Report—Review library goals and objectives

Action Item:

- Discuss and consider approval of Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Adjournment

Meeting Minutes

A critical part of meetings is the recordkeeping and recording of meeting discussions and outcomes. On advisory boards, minutes are usually the job (and sometimes the only job) of the elected board secretary. Care should be taken to minimize problems associated with taking minutes. Steps to minimize problems include:

- A well-designed agenda that can be used as a template for taking minutes
- A group decision selecting who takes minutes
- Recording meetings, with permission, so minute-takers can take board minutes, but have backup content
    - Seeking assistance from others, such as a volunteer or library staff member (library directors and board chairs should NOT take minutes)
- Using technology provided by the library (if needed) to assist (e.g., taking minutes online for immediate posting)

Minutes should meet the following needs:

- Provide a structure during the meeting, that supports the agenda and formalizes the process
- Provide a short review of discussion, identification of the types of decisions and recommendations that are made (e.g., consensus or voting), an overview of assignments and process owners, and timelines and deadlines for those in attendance and those that are absent
- Provide an accurate account of meeting activities for those not in attendance, including board members, staff, constituents, and governing body members
- Provide a body of knowledge (record, archive or history) of the organization for recordkeeping, reference, and reporting
- Provide an official legal record of topics discussed, actions taken, and decisions made for constituents, members, staff, and the governing body

Items to Include in the Meeting Minutes

Minutes should be considered official correspondence of the board and, as such, approved and posted or forwarded according to the requirements of the governing body (i.e., the city secretary or the county judge's secretary). Minutes should include the following items:

- Date, time, and place of the meeting
- Meeting purpose
- Board members present/absent
- Library staff present or absent
- Names and, as required, contact information of visitors, guests, and other nonboard members present
- The agenda
- Process owners, assignments, and deadlines
- Copies of all handouts distributed at the meeting, including research, data, reports, or correspondence
- List of reports made
- Motions made, decisions reached, and any votes taken, including any individuals required to be recognized if parliamentary procedures are used

As/if the governing body requires and/or if parliamentary procedures are used, guidelines for handling written minutes should be adhered to and include, but are not limited to:

- Distribution of draft minutes (location and timeline)
- Distribution of approved minutes (location and timeline)
- Notification of minutes and accessibility (for board members, constituents, governing bodies, and library staff)

Streamlining Meetings

Streamlined meetings mean better board member attendance and productivity. To ensure maximum participation, it is important to respect board members' time. Let them know that you strive to recognize their singular (membership) and ongoing time commitment. Although larger groups are valuable, when designing workflow, consider reducing the size of groups doing background or preparation work. Encourage smaller work groups that work between meetings to make the work of the whole board go more smoothly. Spread out responsibilities, seek support from staff as needed, and create work to be done in smaller rather than larger increments. Techniques to assist in creating streamlined meetings include:

- Restrict the number of agenda items. Boards can only cover so much in meetings, so don't overload the agenda.
- Distribute advance work or background material in advance of the meeting.
- Restrict agenda/meeting items to those that have had preparation; save explanations or data review for memos and/or advance work.
- Plan difficult issues for the earliest timeslot in meetings.
- Prepare a legend for agenda items that includes:
  - "Action" for issues that require action (no matter what that action may be)
  - "Initial review" for new items when the timeline is not critical or is upcoming
  - Mark "information only" items as such
  - Indicate closure as needed, such as "consensus agreement tonight" or "voting before the xxx meeting"
- Estimate discussion time recommended for each issue and consider "time not to exceed."
- Respect guest and public input time by placing these timeslots immediately after the meeting begins, so guests and the public can leave
- Consider using a "consent agenda" that includes no roll call, a pre-meeting reading of the minutes (minutes can be sent earlier or posted online), and correspondence (excluding matters of importance)

With the goal of maximum use of time in meetings, utilize these techniques to support increased productivity. Members should feel their time is valued and well spent. Meetings should not be viewed as burdensome. To decrease negative feelings about meetings in general and increase the board members' knowledge base, meetings might include:

- Poster sessions for before-and-after viewing of programs and services that board members supported.
- A cart with new books for board member review and check out (some library directors even give board members first picks on books not already reserved by patrons).
- Packets for board members with advertising specialty items picked up/free by library staff at association meetings.
- Interesting and unique data, such as materials most checked out or book/service facts from the local library or libraries in general.
- Refreshments!

IV. The Library Director and the Advisory Board

The most important factor in the library advisory board and director relationship is just that—the relationship. The board and director work must be an equal partnership to provide the very best library services and resources for the community. Because advisory boards do not have specific governing responsibilities or decision-making roles or responsibilities, it can be more difficult to sustain a relationship that is time-consuming but not, in essence, required to "do business." To clarify the advisory board's roles and the relationship with the director and staff, board member activities should be outlined. Primary and secondary roles and responsibilities should be outlined, as well as what members typically *don't do*.

It is always important to remember that, along with the value of building a supportive advisory team to assist the library in achieving library goals, the advisory board is typically asked to assist the governing body in hiring library leadership and in the annual evaluation process.

Library Director Roles and Responsibilities

Library director roles and responsibilities vary almost from library to library. The basic responsibilities of a library director include the organization, planning, coordinating, supervision, and budgeting for library services, programs, resources, and activities. In this position, the director also works with the governing body (could be a governing board), advisory board, staff, and community.

It is accurate to say that a library director's role is very different today than it was yesterday. At the very least, if it doesn't appear to be different from the outside, the tools and processes that library directors use today vary dramatically from the past. In today's communities, library directors often manage more than the library. They may manage library partnerships designed to provide additional or unique services, or consortia to expand resources to the community, such as a relationship with an academic library or even a formalized relationship with the local school.

A library director may also serve as manager of another city department or county service. In some communities, the library may operate out of joint use or contiguous spaces with both formal and informal relationships with a school district, college or university, parks and recreation department, a museum, or archival or records management entity.

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The Library Director's Duties and Responsibilities in Regard to the Advisory Board

- Orientation and ongoing education of board members
- Meeting with the library board at regularly scheduled meetings and additional meetings with either the full board, with individual board members and with board subgroups or committees
- Assisting with the preparation of meeting agendas with the board chair
- Informing the board of activities of the library
- Informing the board regarding budget and financing issues, as well as impact of budget decisions at the local, state, and national levels
- Attending meetings, workshops, seminars, and conferences of organizations appropriate to the library and management fields related to board work
- Keeping informed of library trends through professional reading both in general and related to the library
- Identifying, annotating, and disseminating advocacy information to board members to inform and to enlist support
- Coordinating and scheduling advocacy outreach by board members as needed and appropriate

Decision-Making, the Library Director, and the Library Advisory Board

Advisory boards do not make governing decisions for the library. They do, however:

- Review library decisions on matters of constituent concern and indicate support, as appropriate.
- Review policies, on which decisions will be based, for knowledge and recommendations.
- Identify which library decisions and recommendations must be sent for approval to governing bodies.
- Review and participate in strategic planning to assist the library in identifying strategic directions and development.
- Help develop a three- to five-year strategic plan.
- Work with the director to identify decisions and recommendations that should be taken to the governing entity.

In addition, the advisory board should determine the best ways to hear decisions and make recommendations. For example, will the board come to agreement based on consensus or use a process that includes voting? Specific information on these processes can be found in this handbook's section on advisory board meetings.

V. Planning, the Library Director, and the Library Advisory Board

Planning is everyone's responsibility in the organization. Library directors are primarily responsible for:

- Designing and carrying out longer term strategic plans, as well as operational or annual/short-term plans
- Working with library staff, board members, constituents, councils, and/or commissioners and partners to provide input into strategic and operational planning
- Coordinating operational with long-term or strategic plans
- Gathering data to measure all levels and types of plans
- Reporting planning progress or problems
- Analyzing plans to determine revisions for future plans
- Ensuring staff goals, activities, and initiatives are coordinated with other (i.e., regional, state, community, city, county, system, consortial) plans, along with operational and strategic plans

The Role of the Library Advisory Board in Planning

The advisory board's role in planning is to assist the library director in formulating strategic or longer term (three to five years) plans for the library. Advisory board assistance may take the form of reviewing existing plans, identifying benchmark plans and libraries, designing processes, surveying the community, speaking with community organizations, receiving input, generating support, or securing data.

Advisory board members do not, as a rule, assist the library director in forming annual or operating plans. However, it is important for the board to be familiar with plans and lend expertise on how annual plans might assist in accomplishing strategic plans.

Planning: Annual/Operational, Long-Term/Strategic Planning

Libraries create a variety of plans. They include annual, one-year or operating plans, and strategic plans (three to five years), as well as smaller plans, such as public relations and communication plans (typically annual.) Advisory boards do not typically focus on annual or operational planning. Advisory board roles and responsibilities, however, do include board member participation in strategic planning.

Specific Steps in Planning and Board Members' Roles

1. Identify the values, beliefs, or assumptions that are the organization's guiding principles.

   Advisory board members should participate in discussions to determine values, beliefs, and assumptions.

2. Conduct an environmental scan: identify SWOT (i.e., strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats), related competitors and their plans, and relevant benchmarks and models.

   Advisory board members should identify data about their unique constituents, assist in interpreting data, and assessing community plans.

3. Create a vision statement.

   Advisory board members should identify key vision words and benchmark statements. Members should review drafts to ensure that vision statements match constituent needs.

4. Design a mission statement.

   Advisory board members should identify key mission words and benchmark statements. Members should review drafts to ensure that mission statements match constituent needs.

5. Develop the roles, goals, and, if appropriate, values of the organization.

   Advisory board members should review constituent needs to determine if goals and objectives align and also participate in the drafting of the strategic plan.

6. Develop objectives, strategies, and action plans. This requires identifying resource funds and developing policies and procedures to accomplish the objectives.

   Advisory board members should review constituent needs to determine if objectives, strategies, and action plans align. Advisory board members should participate in the drafting of the strategic planning content.

7. Implement the strategic plan.

   Advisory board members endorse the strategic plan and participate in the advertising and dissemination of it.

8. Monitor, evaluate, and adjust the plan as objectives are accomplished and as priorities shift.

   Advisory board members regularly address the implementation of the strategic plan and their role in carrying out the plan, as well as discuss and report plan accomplishments to assist in plan evaluation.

Stimulating Community Input

The library advisory board represents the community or constituent group of the library. In many libraries today, however, far more people are using the library than just the local community members. A credit to the library, this phenomena means that boards need to collect and assess data on the variety of communities they ARE representing. Today's "geographic" library users may include:

The original geographically specific community includes:

- Patrons from neighboring communities who are members or users based on partnership arrangements (for example, these arrangements include use, but not board representation)
- Patrons who use the libraries resources online only from afar or outside the geographic areas
- Patrons who travel through or to the library service area for unique resources or programs to use in the library
- Patrons who travel through or to the library service area for unique resources or programs to use in and check out through the TexShare Card borrowing program (https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/texshare/library user_card.html)

In addition to these diverse geographic users, yesterday's typical users still come to the library; new uses for the library are identified constantly. Library staff and management are aware of these new uses, but often board members and other supporting groups are not aware of the diversity of uses and users. These changing uses and needs include:

- Curriculum support for families that are home schooling
- Higher education support for distance learners (from the community and beyond) whose coursework support is only available online; therefore, users seek support from the public library
- New community users displaced temporarily from their own communities (e.g., economy, natural disasters, emergencies)
- New community users permanently relocating to new communities (e.g., economy, natural disasters, emergencies)
- New uses from existing users, such as technology, assistance with using technology, and education and training for new technology

It is imperative that advisory boards represent the full measure of the community they represent. This includes both library users and *non-users*. Stimulating input includes gathering information on perception and attitude from BOTH groups, as well as specific needs and uses from the breadth of the community. This is often taxing. Suggestions include:

- Public forums designed solely to gather input on the library. (These work best if they are

focused on specific topics, such as "Do we need a new building?" or "Help us design our strategic plan.")

- Feedback forms (for general or specific topics) distributed at other public meetings (partner meetings, council, or commission events, etc.)
- Typical social activities designed to include board members who attend to gather information (sporting events, activities, programs, etc.)
- New social networking or online activities (online forums for discussion, such as Facebook, online surveys or polls, and suggestion box opportunities)
- Board meeting public feedback agenda items for both general and specific topics (with suggestion boxes available for private content as well)
- Standard feedback mechanisms in the library (suggestion boxes, bulletin boards, over the circa, and reference desk general exchanges)
- Survey feedback once or twice a year with online or in-print questions on services and resources in general or on a targeted focus
- Feedback forms submitted to audience participants at public meetings where library representatives are present
- Feedback forms submitted to audience participants at public meetings where library representatives attend and announce they are seeking input

Community and Service Area Data Gathering

Although the information in "Stimulating Community Input" outlines venues and methods to be used in gathering data, the types of data to be gathered vary based on what information and decision making is needed. Gathering and assessing ongoing significant data must be a standard process not only for the library, but also to provide information for advisory board responsibilities. This community data is crucial to the library and its services.

It is important to develop a strategy to research community needs, opinions, and perceptions. Data must not only assess needs, but also evaluate the social conditions and political climate of the service area. Assess population climate and growth projections and consider the users who are typically community or geographic users. Sample issues include:

- How do the economy and the demographics of the community affect the library?
- What are the trends affecting public libraries?
- How have the new community members used the library?
- How did the library support the _____ (example: hurricane, flood, tornado, heat wave)?
- How are childcare providers using the library?
- How are home-schooling parents using the library?

- Has the recent downturn reduced school library service? Is the public library able to step up and meet expanded needs?

Simple areas of research/statistics and data gathering in libraries include standardized data. Links to this data can be found in this handbook's "Resources" found under the Public Library Association link, the Library Research Services link, and the Texas State Library and Archives Commissions "reports" for public libraries. Examples of standardized data include:

- Circulation per capita
- In-library use of materials
- Library visits per capita (taxpayer)
- E-usage (IP address, area, zip code)
- Consortia data
- Program attendance per capita
- Reference transactions per capita
- Reference fill rate
- Title fill rate
- Subject and author fill rate
- Browsers' fill rate
- Materials availability survey
- Registration/authentication as a percentage of population
- Collection turnover rate
- Document delivery

Methods of gathering information vary and data generated include qualitative and quantitative data. Both are important for decision making. Additional modes and methods were listed previously in "Stimulating Community Input." Qualitative and quantitative data can be gathered through:

- Surveys: in person, online, delivered through third party (e.g., newspapers), mailings from community entities (e.g., the city, the power company)
- Focus groups: in person at the library, at other partner locations, or at general community locations
- Interviews (general users and nonusers, individuals or small groups): online, by phone, in person at the library, at other partner locations, or at general community locations

Scenarios of possible use or actual use with discussions following presentation (great for focus groups or small group interviews)

Assessing the Library

How Libraries Assess How Well They Are Doing

- By gathering and assessing one-dimensional or flat data (how many people walk in our doors)
- By gathering and assessing two-dimensional data (the number of users who walk through our doors with library cards)
- By designing goals and objectives and gathering specific data (e.g., the number of children who signed up for the summer reading club will increase by 20% for the FY '12 year over the FY' 11 year.)
- By designing outcomes to gather specific data (e.g., homeschoolers using the library are finding 80% of their curriculum online through the library's web pathfinders.)
- By asking people through interviews, exit surveys, and suggestion boxes (e.g., "How are we doing?" "Did our adult author series entertain you, and if so, which time of day worked best for you?" "Did our parenting program give you information that you didn't have before? If so, what?")

If it would be helpful to compare library and community data to area institutions, the Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) provides data for comparisons in the *Texas Public Library Directory and Statistics* available at https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/pls/index.html. This online resource has extensive data on each public library in Texas filing an annual report to TSLAC. It also includes, for assessing and comparing use, information on populations served, financial resources and expenditures, staffing, holdings, program attendance, hours of operations, circulation and reference transactions, and other comparative data. National comparison data is available from the *Library Research Service* at http://www.lrs.org/.

Additional data should come from managers analyzing the success of goals and objectives; completion of strategies/tasks; accomplishments and completion of action plans; use of and adherence to budget timelines; completion of directives from local, regional, or state legislative mandates; and identification and assessment of adherence to governing body requirements.

It is everyone's job to record data and give feedback. This list includes library staff and board members discussing and deciding evaluation and assessment techniques to be measured:

- Library team designing outcomes/other elements needed
- Choice of appropriate recordkeeping/data gathering forms to gather data

- Initial and ongoing training and education of library staff on using data gathering forms (including advisory board members)
- Motivating employees to use data gathering forms
- Periodically assessing data gathered and a review with staff and advisory board members
- Systematic processes in place for reviewing data
- Interpreting data; and, aggregating and annotating data/analysis

As stated, libraries are shifting how they are changing perception and are focusing on assessing the impact of libraries on the community. To this end, while some current data can be used, additional data gathering techniques are being used and should be on the advisory board's agenda to learn and use.

These processes (new to libraries in the last decade with special emphasis in the last five years) include cost-benefit analysis and determination of impacts and ROI (Return on Investment) studies. The following studies (outlined in the Library Research Service web content found in the *Handbook's* "Resources"), identify positive economic impacts made by libraries at the national, state, and local levels:

- At the national level, Liu (2004) examined the causal relationship between public libraries, literacy levels, and economic productivity measured by gross domestic product per capita using path analysis. This study found that public libraries contribute to long-term economic productivity primarily through literacy programs.
- Recent studies at the state level have found significant economic benefits as well, including significant returns on public investment and generation of gross regional product (Barron, et al. 2005, McClure, et al. 2000). There have been tremendous short-term local economic spin-off benefits from construction alone, as expenditures for state and local library construction doubled from $948 million dollars in 2000 to just over $2 billion dollars in 2005.
- Positive economic impacts are also evident at the city level. A recent study conducted by the Carnegie Mellon University's Center for Economic Development (CMU) for the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh found the library to be the most visited regional asset, attracting 500 thousand more visitors than the Carnegie Science Center and the Pittsburgh Steelers combined. Using a different methodology, the Seattle Public Library found substantial economic returns to the city and local business immediately following the development of the new downtown library. They found the net new contribution to the local economy to be approximately $16 million dollars during the first full year of operation alone (*The Seattle Public Library Central*

Library: Economic Benefits Assessment, Berk & Associates, 2005).

- This study seeks to follow the links between libraries and economic development benefits. It looks at how layers of special program resources and activities in public libraries intersect with specific local economic development strategies already in motion. Return on Investment (ROI) studies alone do not identify the ways in which library services are benefiting students, job seekers, employers, small businesses, and entrepreneurs. This study takes a closer look at the layers of targeted programmatic benefits and investigates and articulates the ways in which public libraries are addressing the needs of individuals and agencies within the context of broader formal and informal local economic development networks. Special programs, which have always been a part of public library services, have increasingly taken on local community development challenges in the past decade. Public libraries are now working with local schools to create a more integrated set of services for children (Saunders 2001), coordinating with workforce development agencies for job and career information services (Durrance 1994), and collaborating with local chambers of commerce to improve business information services for micro and small businesses (Wilson and Train 2002). These special program services are broadening the impact of traditional library information resources by networking with the efforts of other groups in the community.

Additional ROI studies and their value can be found in the "Resources" at the close of this handbook. They include:

- The American Library Association (including content applicable to public libraries found in the Association for Research and College Libraries web division environment)
- The Public Library Association
- The Library Research Service
- OCLC

Library Management Documents

Vision / Mission / Values / Goals and Outcomes Statements

Libraries maintain vision and mission statements, as well as annual goals and objectives. These statements also have ancillary or subdocuments that include strategies, outcomes, and task statements. The vision statement is a broad, overarching vision that the library has for the community. The mission statement identifies the values, beliefs, or assumptions that are the organization's guiding principles. The mission statement acts as a foundation for the development of general and specific goals and objectives, as well as shapes programming plans. In review of vision and mission statements, the following should be noted:

- Some vision statements precede mission statements, while in other libraries mission statements precede vision statements, as long as one is a broader statement. While vision precedes a mission statement in most locations, there is no incorrect way to assign order. Statements should avoid using politically incorrect terminology.
- Public libraries should consider adding in community roles and the board information, education, research, and culture areas of public library service.
- Public libraries should also consider adding in unique resources, special materials, or identification of unique target populations.

Sample Vision Statements

- XYY Library embraces the vibrant future of our community. We create opportunities to participate, connect, and discover by:
  - Offering space for people and ideas to come together
  - Identifying and meeting the needs of our diverse community
  - Providing materials and programs that inform and educate, as well as entertain
  - Providing excellent customer service
  - Preserving the past and a commitment to the culture of the community
  - Encouraging lifelong learning
  - Ensuring freedom of access to information
- The XYY Public Library district will have vibrant libraries and will meet the needs of a diverse and growing constituency by providing services and partnering with other community organizations. The board of trustees and the staff will work together to serve the public and to respond to the changing nature of library services.
- The vision of the XYY Public library is a literate community committed to lifelong learning.

Sample Mission Statements

- The XYY Public Library enhances the quality of life in the community by providing resources and services for education, information, lifelong learning and enjoyment, space and opportunities to gather and connect, and by fostering a love of reading and a commitment to literacy.
- The XYY Public Library provides materials and services to help community members obtain information meeting their informational, educational, and professional needs. Special emphasis is placed on providing contemporary reading materials, providing reference services and technology access and training, and on making facilities available.
- It is the mission of the XYY Public Library to provide access to social and cultural ideas to the community by offering a wide variety of materials, programs, equipment, and software. The library has a special mission to encourage young children and their parents to foster a love of reading and lifelong learning. The library is committed to preserving the integrity of the special collections of xxxx.
- The mission of the XYY 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, that will serve their educational, cultural, and recreational needs.
- The mission of the XYY Public Library is to collect, preserve, and make available library materials in print and electronic formats to serve the recreational, informational, educational, and leisure needs of the community. The XYZ Public Library is committed to supporting a lifelong enjoyment of reading and learning.

Policies and Procedures in One Document

Policies and procedures are separate, required, written management statements. Although the terms policies and procedures are frequently confused, they are distinctly different. They should be, for the most part, treated as different content.

- Policies are broad, guiding, or governing principles that, in general terms, articulate what a library "does" or "provides," or is "charged" to do.
- Procedures are a series of interrelated steps that, when followed, help implement the policy and should be written based on policy, but not as part of policy. Procedures flow from and support policies. They provide direction and should be continuously updated and reflect practice.

Whenever possible, obtain governing entity approval for new or revised policies in writing. Be sure to include the date(s) of revisions.

Sometimes, policy statements might include or have immediately adjacent procedures; thus, they are presented for approval and for reference as the same document. In these cases, the policy content and procedures statements should be clearly labeled as independent content.

Examples of When Combined or Contiguous Statements Could Be Needed

- When it is required by a grant
- When it is articulated or required in legislation/legislative intent
- When your governing body needs/suggests/requires it
- When it is precedent with other related library policies
- When it is precedent with other related governing entity policies
- When the area/situation/service is new/unknown/cutting edge
- When the costs exceed normal or standard costs, and it is prudent to reflect use of resources purchased with public money
- When the area/situation/service is controversial
- Where there are significant increases in areas of public impact as fees or fines
- When there is a revision or a new policy or procedure
- Where there are fines or fees where there were none before (indicating impact on constituents)
- When behaviors exclude constituent groups included before
- When all elements of both the policy and procedure need to be approved by governing bodies (can be combined and brought forward together)

Policies

Policy statements are the foundation for doing business in the library and should precede implementation or action. Policies are governing principles that mandate actions and/or allow actions, and/or constrain actions. Policies should have institution-wide application, be designed to change infrequently, and set a course for the foreseeable future. Policies help define and ensure compliance and enhance the institution's mission. They indicate an "approved" statement of intent and commitment and reduce institutional risk. In the context of libraries or government entities, a policy is approved at the senior levels of the governing entity. Advisory boards, rather than approving policies, view and make recommendations for moving policies forward.

Policies should be approved by governing bodies, approved by legal counsel (when applicable) and be continuously reviewed for currency and timeliness. They should be supported by procedures, reflective of contemporary needs (ADA, harassment, HIPAA), used to inform others for proactive grass roots support, and should answer the question “Why are you doing this?”

Recommended for Policies

- Consistency (among policies as well as within, including titles and library terminology)
- Clarity (who/what/when/where/how)
- Directness (use of both will and will not)
- Specificity (who is supposed to do what)
- Consistent review (who/what/when/where/how)
- Posting and advertisement (location, location, location)
- Benchmarking (similar libraries in size, type, location, population served, etc.)
- Best Practices (similar libraries in size, type, location, population served, etc.)
- A plan for group "buy in" (disseminating and educating board members, staff, community, media, etc.)
- A review of neighboring public library policies (be familiar with what patrons may experience at other locations to answer "They don't, why do you …?")
- A review of any partner policies, as well as any impact of policies on partnership agreements (include reviews and assessments of impact for both formal and informal partner policies as well as contracts, agreements, collaborations, etc.)
- A review of other types of library policies in the region/area (be familiar with what patrons may experience at other types of libraries to answer "They don't, why do you …?")

Not Recommended for Policies

- Don't put numbers or dollars or amounts in
- Don't include dates in (except for the write/approved/review date)
- Don't begin policies or put "in place" without approval by governing entities
- Don't hide them
- Don't create in a vacuum
- Don't put names in but job titles or functional areas
- Don't identify specific jobs but rather assign functions as jobs may change

"Valid" Policies

- Comply with current laws, ordinances, etc. (local, "region," state, and federal)
- Are reasonable, fair, avoid denying services based on unreasonable criteria, and don't impose unreasonable penalties
- Non-discriminatory, based on law, applied equally
- Accessible and quantifiable, well written, displayed, and easily assessed for infractions

Whoever is responsible should always watch for situations that dictate the need for discontinuance, review and/or revision, and/or creation of a new and/or specific policy, such as:

- A new and/or discontinued service
- Receiving or ending grant monies for projects, programs, and/or services
- Legal mandates
- Identified best practices
- Changes in partners and/or collaborations
- Vendor contracts
- A new population
- A new access point
- New or changing technology

Some contemporary areas that may need policy development for public libraries include:

- Access (or lack of) to certain parts of the building
- Access (or lack of) to certain collection materials (in print or online)
- Service to a unique group (e.g., home schoolers)
- Issues regarding unique groups of employees
- Issues regarding unique groups of constituents

Policies identify and provide appropriate structure and rationale as to why a rule or guideline exists. Policies provide a foundation for those interactions between the library and its users and the ways in which programs and services are delivered. These policies should be in standardized form. That form might include policy statements being prefaced by the library's vision and mission statements and library goals and objectives.

Collection management or material's selection policies can include challenged materials, gifts and donations, and the presence and intent of, as well as access to, electronic resources, such as online databases. Facilities policies can include use of meeting rooms and public behavior. Other policies can include programs handled offsite, public relations activities, and outreach activities. Still more policies deal with access, including circulation of materials, conditions for issuing library cards, use of the Internet, and fines and fees assessed by the library. Also consider these areas of public library policy:

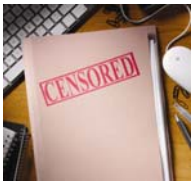
- Behavior—what are constituent or user behavior guidelines; what are employee and volunteer behavior guidelines
- Cataloging and technical services—what to do when a new version of the Dewey Decimal System is issued; to what extent materials will be classified; how to code, classify, and shelve special collections; how vendors will be selected; who selects various types of materials
- Circulation—the types of documents accepted for proof of residency; items that may not be

checked out; items that may not be checked out for typical or normal periods; renewal issues ; loan periods on high-demand items; chain of command in dealing with disputes over fines and fees

- Collection development—who selects various types of materials and formats; who receives various types of review tools; who weeds various collections and nonfiction titles; how "last titles" and discarded items are handled; who manages new and used materials donations, including who officially accepts gift books; what types of materials are accepted and what types are not; how gifts of used materials are stored and who reviews and selects them for inclusion into the collection; how donated materials not selected for the collection are handled
- Emergency/Safety/Security—who has oversight for opening and closing the building; who will be called in emergency situations when the library is open and/or closed; who has oversight for maintaining emergency support resources such as fire extinguishers; evacuation of the building in case of fire or other disasters; who monitors and maintains the emergency communication plan
- Intellectual freedom issues—who maintains written challenge materials to ensure currency; chain of command in dealing with user complaints, and points at which complainants are referred to the next level; who speaks for the library in various stages of challenges
- Personnel—who has oversight for scheduling; who has oversight of timesheets; how many employees may be scheduled to be off duty at the same time; how scheduling is communicated between departments and to the library director; who evaluates employees
- Reference—how many reference questions may be answered per call; the extent to which inappropriate questions can be handled, such as how/if crisscross directory service will be delivered, if medical or legal information is given out, and, if so, in what manner; the extent to which homework help will be provided; the order in which telephone and in-house users will be handled during peak times
- Volunteers—who is in charge of recruiting, training, and supervising volunteers; who determines assignments for volunteers; what the criteria are for allowing court-ordered community service volunteers to work in the library; what the dress code is for volunteers

Advisory board members need to review federal, state, and any local legislation that impacts library issues. Texas-specific information can be found online at Library Laws of Texas at https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/liblaws/index.html

Additional policy area discussion should be held on those policies that express the library's values or beliefs and that provide the infrastructure for public library primary vision and mission. These areas include:



Intellectual Freedom and the Freedom to Read

All libraries must maintain policies needed in the defense of and resolution to challenged materials and resources. A challenge occurs when an individual or a group seeks to remove or limit access to library materials (books, media, audio tapes, etc.) or library resources (electronic media, the Internet, etc.). A ban occurs when an individual or a group succeeds in convincing the library's governing body to order the withdrawal of materials or resources from the library or the restriction of access.

Although the perception of challenged materials focuses on "dirty books," there are many reasons other than sexual content that precipitate challenges to library holdings. These reasons include discussions on or depiction of history or historical events, treatment of populations or groups or individuals, inclusion or depiction of alternative lifestyles, use of terminology or language, the inclusion of graphics or images, and/or public access to the Internet, to name just a few areas. Although Internet access is generally challenged on the grounds of the pornographic or obscene content of many of the websites on the Internet, it is frequently challenged on philosophical and political issues similar to those described above.

Challenges can cause upheaval and must be handled via a systematic process. This process, designed prior to the challenge, can be time consuming. During the process, the library's governing entity, advisory board, director, and staff devote a great deal of their time to answering constituent inquiries, providing media interviews, planning meetings, and working with the governing body's attorneys, administrators, and elected officials to resolve the issue.

The library advisory board's responsibility in these cases is to uphold library policies, which include the principles of intellectual freedom and the freedom to read. A library's vision and/or mission statement may include language providing for "wide and diverse collections in a variety of formats" or for providing "a safe and confidential environment in which users may freely pursue intellectual interests." Vision and/or mission statements including such language, place advocates in the position of defending intellectual freedom as the library's stated mission, as well as on the broader principle of intellectual freedom. It is essential that advisory board members, the director, staff, and other library advocates in the community show respect for opposing viewpoints at all times. They must remain sensitive to the right of all constituents to express their opinions and concerns.

Intellectual freedom is a term encompassing the broad ideal of "freedom of the mind." It includes not only the constitutionally protected freedoms of speech and of the press, but by extension, the freedoms to hear, view, and read. These freedoms are at the heart of library service to the public. These are simplistic definitions for complex and volatile issues. They are presented thoroughly in the American Library Association's *Intellectual Freedom Manual* online at http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/iftoolkits/ifmanual/intellectual.cfm, as well as in the Texas Library Association's *Intellectual Freedom Handbook* online at http://www.txla.org/IF-Handbook.

Libraries should take care to include the following management documents in their arsenal that prepare and protect constituents and their use of the library. These documents include the materials selection policy, the acceptable use policy, and the policy for handling challenged materials.

Materials Selection Policy

All libraries should have a written policy determining the process by which materials and resources are selected for inclusion in the library or in the libraries recommended materials lists (such as web links or pathfinders). A materials selection policy will include processes for selection, criteria for decision making, review sources, and other professional tools used for selection.

Acceptable Use Policy

Each library offering public access to the Internet must decide how to develop its acceptable use policy. Acceptable use information can be a standalone policy or incorporated into the materials selection policy. Issues generally covered in an acceptable use policy include age of users on filtered and unfiltered machines with reference to any relevant federal and state legislation, such as the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)(online at http://www.fcc.gov/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act), conditions under which a user may access the Internet, time constraints to allow fair access, use of filters, cost (if any) for printing, protection of confidentiality, and permissibility of downloading. A sample Internet access policy is included at the end of this handbook.

Policy for Handling Challenged Materials (Reconsideration of Materials)

Many constituent complaints against library materials can be dealt with simply through discussion between the director and the user making the complaint. If discussion does not satisfy the constituent, then a written form should be available for the user to fill out and sign.

The point at which a user files a written statement requesting withdrawal of the title is the point at which the complaint becomes a challenge. Subsequent procedures will be delineated in the policy, including some point at which the constituent may be invited to work with a review committee and/or attend a board meeting to formally present the challenge for board review.

The library board should recommend all such policies to the library's governing body for adoption. Their recommendations add credibility with the governing body. Once the governing body adopts the policy, it carries the authority of governmental resolution or ordinance. These steps provide more favorable conditions for successfully withstanding a prolonged or united challenge.

Procedures

Procedures answer the question “How do you do this?” or “How do you carry this out?” Procedural statements describe how a service is to be carried out, establish the method for handling tasks, and detail the specific steps for implementing policies. Procedures are typically chronological, listing a sequence of steps to be performed with timelines, as needed. Typically, every policy has a procedure. Libraries don't have procedures without an overarching policy.

The library director establishes and revises procedures to provide the most effective, efficient methods for carrying out policies. The library’s advisory board generally does not become involved in establishing and implementing procedures unless those procedures significantly affect the board itself. Regular updates should move from the staff to the board on policy AND procedure changes for their information.

Examples of Procedures

- How to check out materials
- How to issue library cards
- How one applies to use the meeting room
- How one has fines and fees assessed
- How one uses computers at the library
- How staff assess fines

Library Directors Should Have Procedures in Place

- When penalties or punitive measures are needed
- When activities Involve money of any kind
- When activities or services involve access
- When a grant/governing/umbrella body dictates it (administration, laws/legislation)
- When any staffing issues occur

Specific, Recommended Techniques for Writing Procedures

- Consistency (among procedures as well as within)
- Use technical writing techniques for clarity (who/what/when/where/how)
- Directness (XYY will/will not)
- Specificity (who is supposed to do what)
- Consistent review
- Posting and advertisement (location, location, location)
- Benchmarking
- Best Practices
- A plan for group "buy in"
- A review of neighboring public library procedures
- A review of any partner procedures, as well as any impact of procedures on partnership agreements
- A review of other types of library procedures in the region/area
- The use of titles consistent with library terminology and areas of service

The Library's Strategic/Long-Range Plan: Design and Evaluation

Planning is one of the most important functions of public libraries. Similarly, supporting planning is one of the most important functions of the advisory board. Planning is critical to providing an infrastructure for allocating existing resources, seeking new funding, identifying service and resources priorities, demonstrating accountability, and accomplishing goals, objectives, and outcomes. An action-oriented long-range plan is typically three to five years of planning and identifies how the library will operate.

Strategic Plans Should Include

- Three to five years of strategic directions
- Accountability with measurement objectives, outcomes, an action plan, timelines, and process owners
- Growth in depth, breadth, or both (no matter the budget issues) for library services and resources

Building evaluation mechanisms into the library's strategic plan is an important component of the planning process. Evaluation content should state the criteria for measurement to ensure if goals, objectives, and outcomes have been met. See "Stimulating Community Input" and "Assessing the Library" sections of this handbook for evaluation process resources.

Partnership Agreements

Partnerships abound in the professional literature of social work, adult education, basic literacy education, religious or church work, educational environments, libraries, and governing entities to name just a few environments. Partnerships are, in the broadest sense, connections between and among people and groups to share interests, concerns, and create visions for the future.

Historically, partnerships have been formed to educate, open discussion, and address and solve problems among all parties involved. In some institutions, partnerships are not called partnerships but may be called outreach, collaborations, cooperative agreements, arrangements, consortiums, contracts, liaisons, facilitators/facilitations, and or relationships. They can also be formal or informal.

When Partnerships Should be Created

- There is a need, vision, goal, problem, situation, or issue, and the perception is that it cannot be handled by or solved by one entity.
- It does not seem possible to solve the problem or address the situation by just one group, due to magnitude, lack of knowledge, or the amorphous nature of the issue.
- The situation or issue cannot be addressed by one entity, etc., because of lack of resources including expertise.
- The cost of solving the problem or addressing the issue is too costly for one group to address.
- It is important to have a large number of people involved to educate and have good buy-in to the process.

Although there are a variety of recommendations for partnership success (in review of the literature and based on experience), what works best is when one organization takes the lead in design, financial arrangements and responsibility for the project, and the other organizations "contract" or purchase services that they assist in designing.

Formal and Informal Best Practices for Partnerships

- Have an organization or a structure to them (which even "informal" can have)
- Have vision, mission, and goals that focus on outcomes or the end user
- Are flexible and designed to change as issues evolve and problems are solved
- Find ways to involve people, but make maximum use of emerging and existing technologies
- Build in a sustained maximum activity and involvement by stakeholders and other participants
- Provide plans, as appropriate, such as business plans, marketing plans, technology plans, and communication plans
- Promise and produce a product and result that benefits all stakeholders, as well as constituents
- Design an active and interactive initial learning period (pilot programs) and maintain ongoing learning for stakeholders and participants
- Establish and maintain effective communication and ongoing dialog
- Are not thrust upon one group or set of stakeholders without their knowledge or cooperation
- Include a statement of what can be or is being done with what cannot be or is not being done
- Have a partnership or institutional "brand" that defines the unique benefits for partner constituents

Partnerships

One can consult an attorney or pick up a law book for the most formal of language to define partnerships. Outside the legal interpretations, multitudes of definitions apply. In general, the more informal terms for partnerships among entities are:

- Outreach
- Cooperation
- Liaison
- Facilitators/facilitated, facilitations
- Arrangements
- Relationships

The more formal terms are:

- Collaborations
- Consortia/consortium
- Agreements
- Contracts
- Partnerships
- Joint use

Informal

Definitions found online at Merriam-Webster Unabridged Online Dictionary

Arrangements—can be both formal and informal. Having an arrangement for use of a service or an access point often denotes no written paperwork or a "handshake" that solidifies what is to occur. Defined as "an informal agreement or settlement." Arrangements, if successful, often lead to formal agreements.

Cooperation—the term cooperation means a "common effort" or an "association of persons for common benefits" and is often used to establish a foothold for future, more formal arrangements and to assuage fears of a more formal restrictive environment. Only when the term is linked to "agreement" or "arrangement" does it typically denote the formal situations.

Liaison—the term liaison is defined as "communication for establishing and maintaining mutual understanding and cooperation." An organization naming a liaison has made a formal declaration of responsibilities for someone in the organization. This declaration indicates interest and connection, but not a formal agreement of mutual behavior. Instead, it indicates the behavior of only one "side." Liaisons, however, are often preliminary conduits for an information exchange that leads to action and more formal arrangements for both organizations involved.

Outreach—an older term, outreach in both public and academic libraries has historically meant identifying, locating, and reaching out to serve typically eligible clients or patrons but non-users. It is now used more for identifying, reaching out, and establishing partnerships to serve potential users heretofore unable to access or use resources.

Relationships—defined as "connecting or binding participants in a relationship." Relationships are used as informal arrangements. They also often denote an unwritten or handshake situation where organizations are communicating about the issue and deciding how to proceed without formalizing activities.

Formal

Definitions found online at Merriam-Webster Unabridged Online Dictionary

Agreements—can be formal or informal. In an agreement, there is "harmony of opinion, action, or character," or "an arrangement as to a course of action." The more formal agreements are "a contract duly executed and legally binding." The term agreement is often linked to both formal and informal terms such as a "cooperative agreement" or a "consortia agreement." The latter most often refers to the actual paperwork executed that outlines the rules of order for behavior.

Collaborations—one of the oldest terms used in the profession is collaboration. This term denotes a formal process that includes working jointly with others …, "especially in an intellectual endeavor" or "cooperating with an agency or instrumentality with which one is not immediately connected." When organizations articulate that they are "collaborating" with another group, it indicates a formal process of exchanging information, resources, or services.

Consortia/consortium—a very formal term, a consortium indicates an "agreement, combination, or group (as of companies) formed to undertake an enterprise beyond the resources of any one member." Consortia, in existence in libraries for many decades, are formal business agreements for sharing or providing resources and services. Often using consortia as a term means partners or members might have unequal status. Cooperatives indicate more status that is equal.

Contracts—the most formal of terms, a contract is "a binding agreement between two or more persons or parties; *especially,* one legally enforceable," or "a business arrangement for the supply of goods or services at a fixed price." Contracts are the cornerstone of formal arrangements and are found most often when arrangements involve money, resources, and ownership. Money issues can also be tangential. For example, an initial service may not involve money but use or misuse, such as user fees or fines and fees collected.

Joint use—is also referred to as shared space and co-location. This (typically dreaded) partnership is becoming more common and examples include:

- Community college or four-year university who builds one library
- Co-design, funding of higher education environments to serve distance-learning students
- Public and academic libraries built to serve both
- Public and school libraries built to serve both
- Public and academic—public and school who partner to provide one service within another existing building

Partnership—is the friendlier and more often used word both in the literature and in practice for the more formal arrangements. A partnership can be defined as any project in which someone "partnered with another organization on programs or activities to accomplish a common goal." As a more positive term, it implies by its very nature an equal footing for all involved. Not all formal agreements denote equal footing or even need to denote equal footing.

Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)—is a method of establishing and documenting partnerships, most commonly those in a consortia arrangement. It can be a document of incorporation or a method of outlining agreements between or among libraries or institutions. It is an umbrella for other vital documents, including:

- Vision, mission and goals
- Outcomes, including patron or client benefits from relationship
- Organization
- Governance
- Member responsibilities
- Group responsibilities for services
- Resources (more specific articulation of objectives and strategies)
- E-resource and data rights and responsibilities
- Documents relating to access of information, as well as borrowing/access
- Fiscal rights
- Responsibilities and obligations
- Other elements such as local, state, regional, or federal laws that apply

Other terms—that may be used synonymously for serving patrons from one library to another include articulation agreements, guidelines for service, patron/client support agreements, universal service agreement, affiliation agreements, statement of service, service commitments, cooperative service agreements, and service plans.

An example of ways to categorize partnerships:

- Library to/with library
- Library to/with other internal (departments, etc.)
- One library to/with many libraries (joining a group)
- One library to/with many libraries (leading a group)
- Library to/with other external institution partnerships (nonvendor/commercial)
- Library to/with other external institution partnerships (vendor/commercial)

A suggested approach to creating a partnership proposal follows:

Partnership Proposal

All questions and issues must be addressed before the proposal is turned in to X. Please attach relevant documents.

Entity Requesting Partnership

Partner(s) Names/Titles/Organizations

Describe the partnership/project (attach any relevant documents):

1. State the vision, goals, strategies, and outcomes, including products of the proposed partnership. Indicate ownership of product issues and specific benefits for constituents in outcomes language.
2. State how this partnership fits into this institution's goals.
3. State or speculate (if contact with all partners has not been made or finalized) how the partnership fits into all partner/member goals.
4. Outline a preliminary implementation plan, including individual partner roles and responsibilities.
5. Identify the resources required (staff, funding, equipment, etc.) and how these will be provided: money (capital, operating, soft money, hard money) in-kind contributions, revenue from ventures, and other alternative future funding. Next to each source and amount of funding, indicate likelihood and expectations. Identify, if funding is not yet available, what has to occur to secure funding.
6. Include a project timeline, including dates for start-up, evaluation, and closure or continuation
7. State how this partnership fits into the job responsibilities of partner members. If job descriptions, goals, or outcomes need to change, identify how they will change.
8. Outline sustainability of services, resources, etc., following partnership design and implementation for the first funding year.
9. Outline sustainability of services, resources, etc., following partnership design and implementation for (at the very least) the two years following the first funding year.

Approved?

Disapproved? If disapproved, why?

Returned for further information—information needed includes:

Signature (s)

Date/Day

VI. Library Advisory Board Money Matter Issues

A library provides materials and services to all users in the community and, in many cases, to other communities through cooperative services. To provide satisfactory service, money is necessary for an attractive, inviting, and efficient building in a central location; for a wide variety of materials and resources to meet informational, educational, and recreational needs; and, most importantly, for a competent and effective staff to assist users and to organize materials so they are accessible.

Local funds typically support basic services such as buildings, materials collections, salaries, and general operating expenses. State and federal funds have been used in past decades for state and regional inter-library cooperation, collection development, and program innovations. These dollars—greatly reduced or eliminated in the FY'11 Texas Legislative Session—will need to be identified from other sources or locations. Advisory board members, however, should realize that:

Private sources usually specify uses for the money they donate.

Private monies cannot, and typically should not, substitute for local operating expenses from governing bodies.

There are not significant or even appropriate grants to substitute for losses in money at the state and sometimes local level.

Although budget preparation is the task of the library manager, advisory board members need to be aware of the particular mix of funding that supports their library. All board members, however, need to understand and support their library's budget. The library director should keep board members informed about budgeting issues and practices in their library and, as directed, from their administrative and elected officials. The board, in its role as library advocate, should assist in the preparation of advocacy materials for identifying the "ask" issues for additional local funding.

Funding Sources: Public and Private Funding

Public Funding

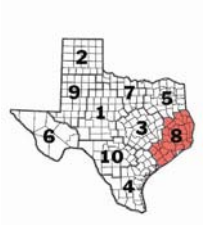
The largest portion of funding comes from appropriations by the library's governing body; i.e., a municipal library derives its primary funding from the city budget, and a county library from

the county budget. Some municipal libraries also receive supplemental funding from their county governments to support services provided to users residing inside their county, but outside their city limits. These funds support the library's operating and capital budgets. Local bonds are typically issued for construction projects such as library buildings and major renovation and expansion projects. Some libraries receive operating monies from partners, such as school districts to provide services and resources to their clientele. In addition, many neighboring communities (cities or counties or partners) may opt to pay a fee to other communities to provide their constituents with library services.

Although Texas public libraries are prohibited from assessing charges for most services, Title 13 of the *Texas Administrative Code* (the enabling legislation for Texas libraries) allows fees to be assessed for some library services.

Charges Permitted at the Discretion of the Library's Governing Authority

- Fees for reserving library materials
- Rent for use of meeting rooms
- Fees for replacement of lost borrower cards
- Fines for overdue, lost, or damaged materials in accordance with local library policies
- Postage charges
- Fees for in-depth reference services on a contractual basis
- Photocopying charges
- Printing charges
- Faxing charges
- Library parking fees
- Charges for service to nonresidents
- Sale of publications
- Rental fees and deposits on equipment
- Charges for the use of materials and databases not owned by the library or major resource center for which the vendor or supplier has charged a borrowing fee



Library Districts

In 1997, the 75th Texas Legislature passed the *Library Districts Act* (codified as *Chapter 326, Local Government Code*), relating to the creation, administration, powers, duties, operation, and financing of library districts in Texas. This legislation allows voters in local jurisdictions to create a public library district to be funded by up to a half-cent in local option sales tax. In 1999, the 76th Texas Legislature amended the law to allow counties with voters numbering 100,000 or more to approve library districts. A multijurisdictional library district law passed in 2005. Complete information on library district legislation and amendments, as well as helpful links on setting up a library district, can be found at TSLAC's "Public Library Districts" website at http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/som/chapter7.html

Library districts can be created in any county of the state. The district may include any contiguous territory within a single county. The district boundaries can include any territory that is part of a municipality operating a municipal public library as long as the governing authority of the municipality consents. The purpose of a library district is to establish, equip, and maintain one or more public libraries for the dissemination of general information relating to the arts, sciences, and literature and is open free of charge to all members of the public under identical conditions.

Although library districts in Texas have increased in number with great success and many other communities plan to establish them, it should be noted that some library districts, in downturn economies, actually provide less income than needed. In general, however, the library-taxing district has provided stable funding for those Texas libraries who have established them. As of 2011, there are 15 library districts operating in the state of Texas.

Private Funding

Library Districts

Friends of the Library (Friends) groups perform a vital function in local fundraising efforts on behalf of the library. They also serve as recipients of donations (cash and otherwise) made to their libraries. The largely unrestricted monies they raise may be held and released to the library as needed. A new trend is the merging of Foundations and Friends of the Library. This allows the two budgets to be merged as well and increases the opportunities for funding larger projects. That is, if some expenses are not allowed by a public entity, the Friends (and Foundation) can supply money for those expenses and have money flow through them.

Foundations

Some Texas public libraries establish foundations for their own benefit and seek to attract major donations. Foundations are fundraising entities apart from the library board and Friends groups. They have their own boards. Foundations may be established for specific purposes, such as the collection of public art to be displayed in library buildings or on library grounds. They also may be established for more general purposes, such as highly specialized and/or expensive programs, collections, or construction projects. Other foundations are established to simply provide additional funding for operational expenses such as shelving or ongoing programming. One trend is for Friends groups to merge with Foundations.

It is advisable for there to be clear lines of communication, along with clearly defined areas of responsibility, between Friends/Foundation boards and advisory boards. Most of the time, the missions of both boards overlap, but there may be areas of difference that, without good communication and strong relationships, could lead to friction.

Private Grants

Businesses, business foundations, and private foundations often donate money for community services through grants and can be a source of funding for public libraries. These grants are usually subject to a competitive application process, and may require that the library apply through a 501(c)(3) organization (like a Friends group) or require proof of the availability of matching funds. TSLAC maintains a list of foundations and corporations that have a history of awarding grants to public libraries on its website, but every community will have a different set of potential funders. It should be noted that private grants or "soft" money do not normally pay for a library's general operating expenses, but instead support the development or expansion of library programming. Grants cannot and should not substitute for support that should be coming from local governing entities.

Partnerships

Partnerships allow libraries to enhance their programming and services by sharing costs with outside agencies. Partnerships are formed when a library and one or more public or private agencies share the cost of a particular program, service, or facility. The project helps all participants achieve their goals and objectives and commonly serves all parties' various constituencies. Partnerships enable libraries to offer programs and services they could not otherwise afford, and are needed more than ever in times of financial cutbacks. See the *Handbook's* "Partnerships" *section.*

VII. A Library Advisory Board's Essential Business

Levels of Involvement

An advisory board advocate must represent the library on many levels. Their essential business encompasses many areas including advocacy, lobbying, communicating need, persuasion and influence, and promotion and awareness.

These Levels Represent Connections and Networking with a Variety of Groups

- Other library advisory board members
- Other library-related organizations such as a Friends group or foundation
- Local government
- Business and industry
- Community groups (profit, nonprofit)
- State and national legislative efforts

Advocacy

Although librarians and library supporters typically think of advocacy as communicating the role and value of libraries to legislative sectors, the reality is that advocacy and advocating for libraries is the responsibility of all library staff and, of course, library supporters. Specifically, advocacy is the responsibility of the advisory board who communicates the role and value of libraries to boards, cities, counties, higher education, and school district organizations. Advocates strive to tell the "library story" to increase visibility and present both data and arguments to decision makers in support of adequate funding for resources and services.

General roles for advocates include:

Speaking Out

Take your case to both individuals and groups as an effective, ongoing program of library advocacy. The time to be certain your neighbors and colleagues are aware of the library's services is not just when you go before them to justify increased taxes or a building program. Ideally, every person you see will connect you with the library. This includes the people with whom you work or attend church, your children's teachers, the grocery store clerk, and, very importantly, every civic, business, and government leader.

Accept invitations where you can speak to groups

Seek such invitations when they aren't offered spontaneously. Be sure your library has an ongoing public relations program that you can draw upon for assistance. A simple 10-minute slide tour of your library can work wonders in bringing the library to people who have never darkened its door. If your library has a website, distribute that link. Always emphasize the role the community takes in developing and supporting the library.

Informing the Media

Your local newspaper and electronic media forums are ideal vehicles for library information. The press should routinely cover board activities. The library should also keep the press informed about ongoing and special programs, major additions to the collection, and special achievements and honors attained by the board and staff. Whenever you go out into the community to speak to a group, be sure the press is informed. Be sure, also, that the newsletter of the group you are addressing contains information about your speech. Whenever there is an important issue concerning your library that your state or federal legislators will be considering, your local press should be informed. If the outcome of the issue would affect your library's services significantly, it is appropriate to request editorial support. This will not only draw attention to your library, but also add a great deal of weight when the press release is sent to the lawmakers who will vote on the issue.

Writing to Legislators

When writing your letters, remember the basics. Use business, personal, or library letterhead. Consider email as well as more traditional mail; however, handwritten notes still work. If you are writing concerning a specific piece of legislation, identify the issue or the bill. Before you actually send the message, be sure that you understand both sides of the issue under discussion. Subscribe to, for example, the Texas Library Association legislative alert forum (see this handbook's "Resources" section.)

Making Personal Visits

The best way to establish and maintain a good relationship with your legislators is with a personal visit. Take advantage of such events as the Texas Library Association's Legislative Day or National Library Week. Ask your governing body to declare a local library week. Be sure the press is aware of such designations, and use that week to call on those persons you feel can help influence the way your community members' library services are provided. In addition, there are times each year when state or federal legislative activity is at a minimum, and lawmakers are not in the throes of a campaign. That is the best time to visit. Take a colleague with you. A party of two or three ensures comfortable conversation and allows you to divide advocacy responsibility. Bring data and review this handbook's "Persuasion and Influence" section to assist in developing the message.

Lobbying

Although lobbying is still greeted with discomfort by many library board members and staff, its negative image is changing. Through the efforts of the TLA Legislative Committee and TL-PAC (not a TLA committee, but a separate fundraising arm of TLA devoted to lobbying activities), lobbying is becoming an important role for library advocates.

Lobbying for funding is nothing more than knowing where funding originates and knowing the people who control the distribution of those funds. In this sense, library board members are "lobbyists," or they would not be board members. They are usually appointed by the governing body, which is the primary source of support for their library. In many cases, the ordinance, which established the board encourages, even mandates, that a prime duty of the board is to consult or advise the governing body as to the needs of the library. Often, the board is also charged with identifying alternative funding sources for the library. They might also meet with other organizations or agencies that can promote the improvement of the library's services and

programs. In this context, board members are appointed to their positions to be library "lobbyists."

Lobbying is the recognized and traditional right of all community members to be heard in matters, which they feel should be addressed. Board members should regard lobbying activities as being of prime importance, a skill to be practiced and perfected, and an essential element of the public relations and awareness program.

Library board members have a leadership role in library advocacy: promoting their library, generating public interest, and winning political support. As a library board member, you must know your community. You are a bridge between the library and the community.

You are the advocate for the library, and you can help the community understand its importance in all aspects of life.

How can an advisory board member become an effective lobbyist for the library? Develop the following ideas based on the board's own talents, knowledge of the community, understanding of the library's services and programs, and commitment to achieving library goals and objectives.

Become an Effective Lobbyist for the Library

- Know your library and libraries in general. Libraries of all types are interrelated. Improvements to libraries, whether school, public, academic, or special, will produce positive results for your library program.
- Develop your legislative agendas. The board should ensure that library-related legislative matters are included within these proposals.
- Plan to provide, both individually and collectively, a persistent program of information to the community. In addition to the formal activities, such as newspaper articles and presentations to groups and organizations, a board member might have lunch with the local newspaper or media editor or meet regularly with the Chamber of Commerce staff or other agency or organization, which will broaden awareness of the library program.
- Get to know the local, state, and national representatives on a personal basis and become knowledgeable about their views and impressions of libraries in general. In this manner, board members can relate their library knowledge and concerns and, when required, influence or change any negative impressions or images that may exist.
- Make regular calls on all elected officials, as well as to other agencies or individuals, who can promote libraries and offer their services and programs. Attend events at which these officials appear and let them know why the board representation is there.
- Look at newly elected candidates for office and impart the "library's story" to these individuals in the early stages of their candidacy.
- Involve and invite those in the political process to library-sponsored events and activities.
- Visit legislators and legislative sessions in Austin or Washington, D.C., particularly during ALA and TLA Legislative Day activities. Join in, to the extent practical, with any legislative activity planned by library support organizations such as TLA, Friends, and Trustees of Texas Libraries, and similar groups.
- Plan regular meetings and support your regular data reporting with members of your governing body. This meeting may be an annual or more frequently scheduled event, but it should be carefully planned to provide the body with specific facts and figures about the needs of the library. It is also effective to spotlight your successes, as these lend credibility to requests for additional resources to support existing or proposed projects, programs, and services.
- Most important, change your mind-set about lobbying and its importance to libraries. It is not a dirty word or concept. It is a very American concept and a right (and responsibility, too) of all community members to participate in the decisions of government, to represent viewpoints, and to support ideas and concerns.

Don’t forget to create the message using data and review this handbook’s “Persuasion and Influence” section.

Communicating Need

There are many ways to communicate need. The more common way of communicating need is through advocacy activities and initiatives. However, promotion and awareness campaigns that include general public relations content, as well as content with a specific focus or a directed message to a target population, are also very helpful.

So how do you communicate your needs to governing entities? How do you convince them you need money?

How do you tell them that you want to stop a service? Or start a service? Or that the community needs a new building. Or that you want to close (or open) specific hours?

You can apply a process to getting the most important points across to the most important audiences. Following are the steps in a "communicating needs" process. This process can be found in the general literature on persuasion and influence:

"Communicating Needs" Process

1. Determine your timeline for communicating to and convincing others.
2. Identify specifically who you need to convince.
3. Assess the best arguments for communicating and convincing.
4. Assess the best styles for communicating your needs.
5. Identify and gather the facts, figures, and information needed for the communication planned.
6. Anticipate questions and prepare answers for the target audience.
7. Define information needs and gaps you may have in your presentation or in answers to perceived/possible questions.
8. Determine if elements of emotion, e.g., patron input or great need, will sway decision-makers.
9. Decide if the logical negative is the way to convince others by identifying consequences for not acting on requests.
10. Decide if the logical positive—why something will work and why it offers benefit—will best sway decision makers.
11. Provide scenarios and choices that employ creativity, interesting changes, alternatives, and proposals.

Promotion and Awareness

The advisory board participates in the design and implementation of library promotion and awareness activities that highlight the existence and use of the library. Public awareness, whether achieved through a publicity program or public relations, generates public support. Library promotion and awareness activities are developed through a formal planning process that involves all library boards, constituents, and library staff and management. Once developed, the plan should be reviewed and revised on a regular basis and aggressively implemented.

What Promotion and Awareness Plans Include

- Promotion and awareness goals and objectives
- Identification of specific target audiences
- Library and community timelines of activities and events on an annual calendar
- Identification of funding required to implement the promotion and awareness plan
- Identification of individuals (advisory board members, Foundation board members, staff, volunteers, Friends of the Library members) who actively participate or perform specific duties or have special responsibilities under the plan

Examples of Promotion and Awareness Activities

- Sponsoring cultural and educational programs, such as film series, book discussions, author appearances, and seminars on subjects ranging from investments to rare books, keeping in mind the community's programming preferences.
- Sponsoring and participating in book sales and other fund raising activities to provide money for projects or items not covered by the library's operating budget
- Communicating the library's financial needs to the governing body or the voters
- Advocating for increased library services and funding at the local, state, and national levels
- Organizing and/or providing volunteers for work on specific or ongoing projects suggested by the library director
- Supporting new services
- Operating or sponsoring entrepreneurial activities, such as gift shops with library advertising specialty items and/or used book stores in the library

Effective Communication Information

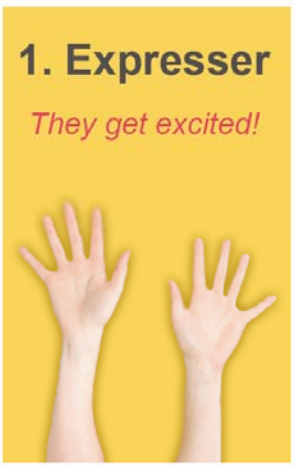
Advisory board members should strive to create communication processes that work for all members and meet the needs of the board overall. To this end, communication styles should be studied in general and individual board members should consider identifying their own communication style to increase their knowledge of communication patterns between and among board members.

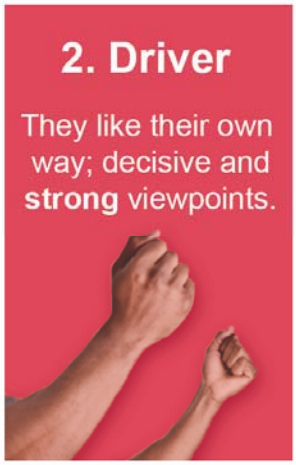
There are many research studies that define communication styles. A simple but effective approach is a four-style model. It identifies all communication styles as one of the following four: 1. Expresser, 2. Driver, 3. Relater, 4. Analytical.

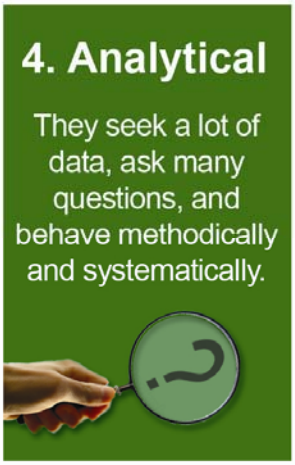
The Expresser gets excited while the Driver likes their own way and has decisive and strong viewpoints. Relaters like positive attention and want to be helpful and regarded warmly. Finally, the Analytical seek a lot of data, ask many questions and behave methodically and systematically.

Of course, people may communicate differently given the person they are speaking with or speaking "to." Different situations drive different styles or types of communication. However, these four classic styles provide a foundation for discussing topics and balancing ideas as they come from board members. They also identify initial reactions of board members and give the facilitator, board officer or discussion leader a good idea of what to expect.

If the board officer is not aware of individual board member communication styles, the group leader can use these four areas to guide gathering opinions, identifying issues for discussion, and then requesting that feedback be given within the four categories. Board members are then tasked to discuss the issue by playing one of the four roles.







Facilitating Discussion

Advisory boards, as groups, often have a mind and life of their own. A variety of techniques can and should be used to achieve successful group work. Successful advisory board discussion is one of the measures of board activity and business success. How successful these discussions and activities are is directly related to the type and level of involvement of all interested parties, even the public when appropriate.

Facilitating board work and/or group processes can be a challenging and rewarding experience.

Professionals possessing skills in facilitation are valuable assets to organizations. The most successful facilitators are those that have knowledge of the group process, group discussion techniques, specific communication techniques for managing the group, as well as the complete knowledge and skills required of group recorders. Board officers, no matter how experienced, need training or refresher training in leading groups, encouraging conversation and discussion, and consensus building.

Individuals, typically officers, serve as facilitators for discussions and group work.

Discussion and Group Facilitator Responsibilities

- Management of the group learning process
- Direction of group ideas and feelings
- Development of thoughts from all group members
- Continued focus of group process on main ideas
- Maintenance of a space where members feel safe and comfortable (as well as valued)
- Production of usable group memory
- Success of group goals

As with other group roles, there are misconceptions on how facilitators operate.

There are several things that a facilitator or a facilitated session is not.

What a Facilitator or Facilitated Session Is Not

- An opportunity to expound on one's beliefs.
- Passive group guidance that involves only calling on members.
- A discussion where only views that agree with the facilitator are allowed.
- A randomly planned discussion.
- A session where views are presented that represent only one area, such as one office or department or one way to do a service.

What a Facilitator or Facilitated Session Is

- Valuing all group members, their background and contributions
- Allowing group members to talk much of the time
- Helping a group focus energy, gather ideas, and find solutions

Facilitator Recommendations

- Prepare for the process, as well as the content.
- Value diversity in the group.
- Note where gaps in background of participants occur and try to get the group as a whole to expand ideas.
- Practice nonverbal behavior that doesn't indicate judgment.
- Pick up on group member clues, such as body language showing hostility, boredom, or distress.
- Be aware of conscious or unconscious bias of members, such as gender, age, department, service area, or career level.
- Consider using techniques, such as "echoing" a person's thoughts back to allow the group to comment or clarify.
- Build flexibility into your presentation; if one technique doesn't work, you can switch.
- Concentrate on your primary role, which is that of listener and interpreter.
- Give each member your complete attention.

Although these are not the only ways to get groups conversing, these should be considered:

Questioning

Any group process chosen can begin by the facilitator posing questions to the group. However, the process may be too controlled by the choice of relevant questions and the recording of participant responses.

Brainstorming

This process has the facilitator tossing out ideas and the group responding with wild and even impossible ideas. The guidelines for brainstorming include the lack of evaluation of ideas as they are generated, a rapid flow of

ideas, and a timeline, such as a 10-minute brainstorming session, followed by a 15-minute discussion.

Nominal Group (or Round Robin)

Members individually respond in some order to specific ideas or issues presented. One issue is handled at a time. The strict definition of nominal group techniques includes options individually written on paper and either a verbal or written discussion occurring for each idea or issue presented.

Impossible Questions

The facilitator structures a question to elicit responses concerned with "what may be impossible … but if we could, we would."

Visualization

Group members are given an ideal situation and asked to visualize it and respond, or group members are asked to create an ideal situation, and then record it so that others may "see it." Then, the group discusses it.

Problem Solving

The facilitator, a group member, or the group as a whole discusses a situation or issue, identifies a problem, generates a list of options or ways to solve the problem, and then develops a plan.

Evaluate Options

The facilitator presents an issue, idea, or problem with a list of ideas, concerns, or solutions. Then the group members analyze, reduce, add, and decide on the list or the options presented.

Techniques, words, and phrases fall into two broad categories: those to use in discussion to generate information and those to use to manage the group.

Phrases or Questions to Use in Generating Information

- How does _____'s comment (central theme, example, etc.) relate to our discussion group theme?
- Could someone list three ways that _____'s idea could become a reality?
- _____suggested three solutions to our group discussion theme. Can anyone add to the list, delete items, and prioritize it?
- Compare/contrast _____'s idea with what your office's experience has been.
- Let's take _____'s main topic and spend 10 minutes throwing out ideas on how it might work.
- Here are the two main themes we've just heard. I'd like to go around the table and have each member add to the list, delete, or reprioritize.
- Here's an impossible thought--"We have all the money we need for community partnerships. How could we spend it?"
- Imagine a perfect community situation where …. Comment on that.
- _____said that this situation exists in offices today, what causes this?
- Building on what _____said, give me an example of … and how it works in your community.

Phrases or Questions to Use in Managing the Group

- Hold that thought, make a note of it, and then share it when _____ is through.
- What an interesting idea! Comments? Agreement? Disagreement?
- Wait just one minute, and we'll get to your idea.
- Rather than sharing that now, wait until …
- All of these ideas are important, so let's go in this order: _____ first, then _____, and then you.
- What do you see that is good in this situation (examples, etc.)?
- We've had several negative comments; any positive ones?
- Let's keep things positive.
- I want to keep things on our timeline so one more comment, then we'll move along.
- I love that idea. Can you reword that to fit our list?
- How do you think your comment relates to the main issue?
- I'm going to limit the next idea exchanges to three-word phrases to conserve time.
- Can everyone live with this list?
- Let's let the recorder review the three issues. Then, let's get opinions on each list.
- (Name of the person taking notes or the Secretary of the Advisory Board), would you re-read our list (clarify our map) so far?
- Tell us more about …
- That's a good way to build on what was said.
- Can anyone add anything?

Phrases or Questions to Use in Managing the Group or Problems

- Quiet members:
  - I'd like to hear from everyone on this.
  - I notice your expression of agreement. Which point makes the most sense?
- Sidebar conversations:
  - I'm sorry. I didn't hear what _____ said. Could we have quiet?
  - I'm glad we all have ideas, but it's difficult to hear (or concentrate) with so many people speaking. Could we have only one person speaking at the table?
  - I'll have to ask you two to wait to speak, as we can't hear. I'm sorry but we need you both to be quiet.
- Competition:
  - Both of you have great ideas. I want us to record all your comments.
  - Rather than responding to just _____'s ideas, what do you think of _____'s comments?
- Members with lack of focus:
  - How does this relate back to our main issue?
  - Could our recorder please review the main issue for us so we can review our main ideas?
  - I'm not clear on how your point relates to the ideas. Could you clarify?
  - Save that idea until later.
- Monopolizing members:
  - We've got your thoughts on that now. Let's get other ideas.
  - Let's get some other ideas on this.
  - I had to interrupt you since our time is tight, and I want to be sure we all get a chance to talk. Because our time is limited, could you summarize that point?
  - Save the rest of your comments, and I'll get back to you after a few others have had a chance to speak.
- Attacking and criticizing ideas and people:
  - I want to get all ideas out on the table, so let's value all comments.
  - Wait ... I'd like all opinions to be considered.
  - Let's remember to focus on issues and not personalities.
  - Your tone of voice indicates a strong disagreement that's hard to work with; rephrase what you're saying.
  - I can see/hear you have strong feelings about this. Setting your feelings aside and in the spirit of positive and negative criticism, how would you rephrase your comments?
  - Stop and think a few seconds about how you're sounding. How could you rephrase that to sound less harsh?

- Confusing messages:
  - I don't understand. Let me rephrase it and see if I'm getting it.
  - I don't understand. Could you rephrase your comments?
  - Can you clarify your comments?
  - Could the recorder repeat those last statements? I'm not clear.
  - Do we understand the issues/comments?
  - I'm confused about …. Please clarify your comment on …

Managing Change

Although all organizations are undergoing exponential change (and not all for the good), libraries have been thought of as more static environments for many years. Many who support libraries (e.g., advisory board members) are surprised to see libraries as 21st century fast-moving entities. Library directors should pre-assess board members to make sure that orientation and training for new members includes content designed to inform, update, and, if needed, to change outdated perceptions. Boards participate in strategic planning, which typically identifies dramatic changes for libraries; therefore, library staff, resources, and services often need assistance in changing.

Techniques for Dealing with Change and Renewal

- Address the issue of change head on. Provide development content on change: how change affects people, how people “see” and deal with change, and how they get “through” change. Establish standard visual images to communicate and educate, such as flow charts and paradigm shifts.
- Involve others in changing: planning for change, designing processes for changing, gathering data, and analyzing changes. Engage not only board members, but also members from other groups as well as staff in the process.
- Identify and inform (early) those who need to help carry out changes.
- Clearly define people's roles in change discussion, the goals of possible changes, and their achievement indicators.
- Disseminate decision to change and the goals and objectives for the change in writing.
- Design flexibility into the change process, as well as specific timelines; establish timelines, parameters, and define the limits of the change. If, at all possible, don't change too quickly.
- Build in adjustment time for all people involved, and allow people to take adequate time to assimilate new skills, procedures, support mechanisms, and work behaviors that are needed to successfully institutionalize the change.
- Identify good and bad aspects of change and address all sides, and, whenever possible, focus on the data supporting the need for change.
- Design adequate training for change elements.
- Don’t assume that those needing to change (whatever level) can figure out how to get there. Assist those changing by designing scenarios, making choices, inviting other scenarios from those who have unique situations that only they might be able to identify.
- Design and implement a proactive plan for dealing with rapid change/information-sharing with governing bodies.
- Assess “anchor” organizational elements for their stability, and ensure that management documents are dynamic and current.

VIII. Texas State Library and Archives Commission

The Texas State Library and Archives Commission (TSLAC) is a state agency that supports citizens, local governments, and libraries across the state. The agency is governed by a seven-member Commission, appointed by the Governor. Within the agency and specific to advisory boards, TSLAC's Library Development and Networking Division (LDN) plays the most direct role in supporting public libraries. Following is an explanation of how.

Public Library Accreditation

TSLAC accredits libraries on an annual basis through the *Public Library Annual Report*. The agency is required to collect certain data from Texas public libraries for the federal agency, the Institute of Museum, and Library Services (IMLS). IMLS uses the data as the basis of a composite report on public libraries of the United States and for state-to-state comparisons. TSLAC in turn, also uses some data elements collected in this report to accredit Texas public libraries. Boards should be generally aware of annual reporting as a process for the library, especially when it comes to the data needed, the time it could take to complete and the deadlines for completion (Spring). In addition, if the library doesn't meet accreditation requirements, the board should be aware that there is an appeal process and a probationary period that allows the library time to improve. The board should also be aware of the data that is reported in the following categories: general information (hours, branches, bookmobiles, square footage, etc.), library expenditures and income from all sources, local income by source, library collection information, local library services, library staffing and salaries, resource sharing, and internet and electronic services. Board members can consult https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/pubs/arsma/index.html for more details as to specific data elements (and how to calculate them).

Consulting

LDN consultants have a broad range of expertise in technology; in library management and planning; in management of volunteer services; in public relations and marketing; in outreach services to disadvantaged, minority, and handicapped persons; in collection development and in many other general areas of library science. Consultants assist library directors and staff, as well as Boards, Friend's and foundations, in meeting their local needs. Feel free to contact our staff here: https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/consulting/index.html

Continuing Education

LDN offers a variety of continuing education opportunities that are available both face-to-face and online for the staff of public, school, academic, and special libraries in Texas. Our continuing education and consulting (CEC) staff offer live webinars on a variety of library science topics, several times a month. We archive (record) those online events so that library staff can watch at their convenience. Annually, we offer several in-person workshop series around the state. We have an ongoing education program for library directors that work in libraries with a population of less than 25,000 called the Small Library Management Training Program. There are several options for taking free, self-paced, online courses: TSLAC's online training website and our membership to Webjunction (https://tx.webjunction.org). Find links to all this and more here: https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/workshops/index.html.

Grants and Funding

LDN staff maintains information about grants and state contracts for libraries. We also provide eligibility and application information for publicly funded Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grants, in addition to available privately funded awards. Of note, TSLAC offers its own competitive grants to public libraries, publishes information on upcoming grant opportunities on our blogs and mailing lists, maintains a list of private foundations and corporations known to support libraries in the state, and provides training on grant writing and fundraising. LDN staff can also assist libraries in applying for substantial discounts on telecommunication services and internet access using the federal E-Rate program. https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/landing/libfunds.html

Library Science Collection

Advisory board members, interested citizens, and library staff can take advantage of free borrowing and research services from our unique collection, the Librarian's Library! Books on library policies, procedures, new technologies, outreach, evaluation, planning, and every library science

subject (well, almost) are available from this collection. Borrow for free and have books directly mailed to your door. https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/lsc/index.html

Plinkit

The Public Library Internet Access Toolkit (Plinkit) provides a free, hosted website solution for public libraries. It's a content management system that's easy to update and no knowledge of html is required. If your library needs a website, find out more here: http://texas.plinkit.org/

Summer Reading Programs

Public libraries across Texas have access to summer reading programming and marketing materials from early literacy to adult via the Collaborative Summer Library Program at http://www.cslpreads.org/. Past Texas Reading Club programs and artwork produced by TSLAC are also available for library reference at https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/ld/projects/trc/index.html.

TexShare

Is a consortium of Texas libraries joining to share print and electronic materials, purchase online resources, and combine staff expertise. TexShare services are available to patrons of participating member libraries all across Texas, regardless of institution type, size, or location. Perhaps best known for the statewide databases, TexShare allows citizens free access to journal articles, book chapters, and rich reference resources that expand libraries' physical collections exponentially. Advisory board members can even get home access to the databases for their own research—just ask your library staff to obtain access. It's important for library advisory board members to understand the services offered via TexShare because these are such rich resources for citizens. Libraries are the gateway to this information. If citizens don't know, they cannot take advantage of all the great, online information and other service offerings. In addition to the database program, other TexShare services include the TexShare Card Program (which allows for borrowing from libraries outside your area), Library of Texas (a federated search tool that works somewhat like Google), and the Inter-Library Loan/Courier Services (another way to expand the library's collection is by borrowing from other libraries and participating in a courier service that can deliver such materials between libraries). For detailed information on TexShare programs, visit: https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/texshare/index.html.

IX. Appendices

A. Management Documents/Professional Statements

Sample Content for Internet Access in Public Libraries

Sample Advisory Board Bylaws

Sample Notice for Advisory Board Meetings

B. Glossary of Library Terms, Acronyms, and Initialisms

C. Resources

A. Management Documents/Professional Statements

The advisory board should work through the umbrella governing body and through the library director to establish the management documents necessary to conduct advisory board business.

Overview of the Types of Documents Critical to Advisory Board Success

- Orientation manuals including overviews of the library, the library's vision, mission, strategic directions or goals and objectives, recent reports, past advisory board minutes and board reports
- Library plans, including but not limited to, strategic plans, short-term plans, facilities/building plans and snapshot overviews, marketing and public relations plans, and technology plans
- Library advocacy materials
- Budget overviews, including justifications
- Financial documents for grants, fundraising, alternative financing, such as usufruct, wills/estates, and bond funds
- Policies—human resources, public access/use
- Procedures—human resources, public access/use
- Foundation documents that serve to support the profession of librarianship can be found posted to or linked from the American Library Association including:
    - Access for Children and Young Adults to Non-print Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Access to Electronic Information, Services, and Networks: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Challenged Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Codes of Ethics
    - Confidentiality Policy and Procedures
    - Diversity in Collection Development: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Economic Barriers to Information Access: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees
    - Evaluating Library Collections: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Exhibit Spaces and Bulletin Boards: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Expurgation of Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - Freedom to View Statement
    - Free Access to Libraries for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
    - The Freedom to Read

- Guidelines for the Development and Implementation of Policies, Regulations, and Procedures Affecting Access to Library Materials, Services, and Facilities
- Labels and Rating Systems: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- The Library Bill of Rights
- Library Bill of Rights and Interpretations
- Library-Initiated Programs as a Resource: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Restricted Access to Library Materials: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Meeting Rooms: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records
- Privacy: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights
- Suggested Procedures for Implementing "Policy on Confidentiality of Library Records"

ALA Resolutions 242

- Resolution on Opposition to Federally Mandated Internet Filtering
- Resolution on Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) Technology and Privacy Principles
- Resolution on the Use of Filtering Software in Libraries
- Guidelines for the Development of Policies and Procedures Regarding User Behavior and Library Usage

Sample Content for Internet Access in Public Libraries

Among the most important documents in public libraries are the statements that articulate access to the Internet. Given the dynamic nature of the Internet, the rapidly changing world of technology hardware and software, and the often rapidly changing roles and responsibilities of public libraries, Internet policies and procedures should be reviewed continuously to provide appropriate guides for offering access to the Internet.

Because of the diverse nature of libraries and the variety of sizes and types of libraries, it is not easy to provide a single example of an Internet Acceptable Use Policy to meet all needs. Instead, the critical elements of policies and locations where policies can be found should be reviewed prior to libraries drafting their own. A draft policy with the critical elements needed, however, is outlined on the next page.

Critical Elements of an Internet Access Policy

- A simple explanation or definition of the Internet
- Relevant federal, state, local, or institutional legislation or policy that governs public access to the web in general or by age of patron/library user such as:
  - *ALA Washington Office*
    http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/wo/index.cfm
  - The Children's Internet Protection Act
    http://www.fcc.gov/guides/childrens-internet-protection-act
  - Pending Internet Legislation
    http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/ifissues/issuesrelatedlinks/pendinginternet.cfm
  - State Internet Filtering Laws for Schools and Libraries- (including Texas law)
    http://www.ncsl.org/default.aspx?tabid=13491
  - *Texas Constitution and Statutes*
    http://www.statutes.legis.state.tx.us/ (search by keyword such as Internet)
- The library's vision and/or mission statement that articulates the library's role in providing access to the Internet
- A statement of why libraries provide Internet access to patrons
- User/patron general information, including definition of what is an adult and what ages are not adult or underage
- Adult user guidelines (and remote users) with guidelines for what information is needed to register them and to gain access
- Internet safety guidelines and recommendations
- Guidelines for legal and ethical uses
- Conditions of use (length of viewing time, downloading, printing, etc.)
- Confidentiality
- Staff assistance (point of use, training, etc.)
- Sanctions
- Decision making regarding use and misuse
- Library board viewing, approval, signatures, review, and approval dates

Sample internet policies (and additional information) can be found at the following web locations:

- ALA Libraries and the Internet Toolkit
  http://www.ala.org/ala/aboutala/offices/oif/iftoolkits/litoolkit/default.cfm
- Children and the Internet: Policies that Work
  http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/divs/alsc/issuesadv/internettech/childrentheinternetpoliciesthatwork/index.cfm

Advisory Board Bylaws

Advisory board bylaws are required for board organization and business. As a public entity, the board must design, approve, maintain and consistently review bylaws as well as "register" bylaws according to the processes established by the governing entity.

Library boards must adopt bylaws and guidelines or rules and regulations and policies to conduct business such as public meetings, communication, advocacy, public relations, recordkeeping, roles and responsibilities, and relationships. Bylaws for public library advisory boards should be brief and are typically standard board operating guidelines. However, due to the variety of umbrella institutions for public libraries (cities/counties with varying populations and structures, etc.), it is not always easy to provide an example of perfect bylaws.

Some Critical Elements of Bylaws

- Umbrella organization authorization and the specific, formal identification of the advisory board
- Board power and influence and roles and responsibilities specifically as an *advisory entity*
  - Applicable ordinances
  - Advisory parameters as to what and to whom
  - Any relevant policies
  - Role in planning and guidance of operations
  - Role in interpreting policies as appropriate
  - Role in development of library funding
- How board members are selected
- Member terms, roles and responsibilities, power, and duties
- Board organization, such as officers and officer roles and responsibilities and how bylaws are managed
- Board workgroups, such as committees and committee duties or roles and responsibilities
- Board relationship to the library director
- How the board conducts business (meeting location; time, and frequency; quorum, any financial dealings)
- What guides board business, such as parliamentary authority, including calling and holding regular and special meetings, posting agendas, posting minutes
- Audience participation (comments, hearings, and general communication) in public meetings with relevant codes

- An outline of the order of business at meetings, such as voting; membership meeting requirements; attendance expectations; member sanctions; communication rules for board business meetings and specifically:
  - Call to order
  - Adoption/amendment to agenda
  - Roll call
  - Approval of minutes
  - Correspondence and communications
  - Report of library director
  - Committees reports (standing, ad hoc)
  - Unfinished business
  - New business
  - Adjournment
- Reporting board business in general and specific to the library and staff (minutes, annual reports, and other board communication)
- Board member behavior, such as ethical behavior, roles and responsibilities for communication and public relations

Sample board bylaws can be found on the web in a number of locations. Bylaws posted on the Internet should be vetted to ensure they are current, they apply to advisory rather than governing boards, and, for the best match to a library's needs, should be assessed as to the size and type of library they represent.

A General Outline for Advisory Board Bylaws

ARTICLE I

NAME

As authorized by the (City, county, entity) Charter, xxxx of _____, and xxxx Ordinance No._____. This body shall be known as the _____ Public Library Board. *(Often the word "advisory" is inserted in the title to clarify roles and responsibilities.)*

ARTICLE II

MEETINGS

Section 1.

The regular meeting of the library board shall be held at a time designated by the board in the library or such other place the board may determine.

Section 2.

Special meetings may be called by the chair or at the call of any two members of the board, provided that notice thereof be given to all board members and the library director.

Section 3.

A simple majority of the members shall constitute a quorum at all meetings of the board. A meeting may be held without a quorum but is identified as such in minutes and board communiqués.

Section 4.

All questions presented for a vote of the library board shall be decided by a simple majority of the quorum. *(The vote may or may not include the vote of the chair.)*

Section 5.

Any member of the board who misses three consecutive meetings without good cause shall be deemed to have resigned, and the board will recommend to xxxx that a replacement be appointed for the balance of the unexpired term. *(The board should determine—in consultation with the director if board members appointed to fill out terms are then eligible for appointment to the board given term limits.)*

Section 6.

Board business should be conducted according to parliamentary procedure or rules of order. The process should be chosen by the board and the latest edition of the rules should be used to conduct business in all business meetings and board forums. (*Boards should work within the xxxx structure to determine if specific parliamentary processes are required or if they may choose another.)* Processes to choose from include *Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised (latest edition)* or *Sturgis Standard Code of Parliamentary Procedure (latest edition).*

ARTICLE III

OFFICERS

Section 1.

The officers of the board shall be a chairperson, a vice-chairperson, and a secretary.

Section 2.

Officers shall be elected and take office at the first regular meeting after new board members have been appointed and sworn in.

Section 3.

Vacancies in office shall be handled as follows:

(a) In the event of resignation of incapacity of the chair, the vice-chair shall become the chair for the unexpired portion of the term.

(b) Vacancies of officers other than the chair shall be filled for the unexpired term by special election.

Section 4.

Duties of the officers shall be as follows:

(a) Chair:

(i) Preside at all meetings.

(ii) Represent the library board at public functions of the xxxx (city, etc.) and at events such as special library events, local, state, or national advocacy activities for the library or for local, state, or national association activities.

(iii) Appoint standing, special, or ad hoc committees.

(iv) Assist library director in establishing the agenda for each meeting. Agenda items requested by any board member will be included.

(v) Liaison with the governing authority regarding library issues.

(b) Vice-chair:

(i) Assist the chair in directing the affairs of the board and act in the chair's absence.

(ii) Serve as chair of ad hoc or special committees or projects such as chair of an advocacy initiative.

(c) Secretary:

(i) Be responsible for the accuracy and posting of the minutes of the board meeting and bring any corrections to the attention of the board at its next meeting. The secretary shall sign the approved minutes and complete recordkeeping activities required by xxxxx.

ARTICLE IV

COMMITTEES

Section 1.

Committees may be appointed for completing regular business of the board and/or special purposes by the chair and by special request from the library director or the governing authority. Committees, following requests, are formed with the consent of the majority of the board. All committees will have at least one library board member serving on them. Standing committees are typically formed annually and reviewed for continuation annually. Ad hoc or special committees are automatically dissolved upon completion of the activity or project.

ARTICLE V

LIBRARIAN

Section 1.

The library director serves as an ex-officio member of the board.

ARTICLE VI

POWERS AND DUTIES OF BOARD MEMBERS

Section 1.

Library board members provide opinion, support, and expertise as needed, but do not have governing authority. Board members shall:

(a) Abide by applicable ordinances of the xxxxx _____..

(b) Act in an advisory capacity of the xxxxx (city council, city manager, county official, library director, etc.).

(c) Review existing policies and recommend new ones to govern the operation and program of the library.

(d) Assist in strategic planning.

(e) Provide opinion and guidance, as appropriate, for special issues to include, but not be limited to, new facilities, the expansion of existing library facilities, and the performance evaluation of the Library Director.

(f) Provide opinion and guidance, as appropriate, for new library services.

(g) Assist in interpreting the policies and functions of the library to the public.

(h) Encourage in every possible way the development and advancement of the public library at local, regional, state, and national levels.

(i) Participate in advocacy initiatives including, but not limited to, local issues, including funding issues and requests, state advocacy activities, and federal advocacy initiatives.

ARTICLE VII

AMENDMENTS

Section 1.

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote at any regular meeting, provided all members have been notified of the proposed amendments at least xxxxx days prior to such meeting. Such amendment would then be subject to approval by xxxxx.

Sample Notice for Advisory Board Meetings

The application of Open Meetings Act legislation has long been debated. Although the Texas Open Meetings Act and most Open Meeting Acts do not typically apply to advisory boards, unless the umbrella governing body routinely reviews and approves (some say "rubberstamps") the board's actions, it is good business practice to observe open meeting guidelines. In addition, all advisory boards should work though the city, county, or any other entities that appoint them to determine if that governing body recommends or requires that their appointed advisory boards follow any relevant codes, acts, or standard business practices.

A Typical Posting for Open Meetings

Notice of Meeting

_____ Public library board (Use the board's specific title, which may include "advisory.")

Address of Meeting Location

(Simple directions should be included if the meeting is in a nonstandard, atypical, or hard-to-find location.)

Date and Day of Meeting

Time of Meeting

Public Comment Sign in (from x to x)

Agenda:

Call to Order

Approval of Minutes

Public Comments

Discussion Items:

- Library Reports
- Marketing Group Report: Review suggestions for marketing library programs and services
- Director's Report: Review library goals and objectives

Action Item:

- Discuss and consider approval of Internet Acceptable Use Policy

Adjournment

Accessibility Statement (for the library board and for meeting locations):

The _____Public Library is committed to providing access to all community members wishing to attend meetings to the best of their abilities and to meet reasonable accommodations. The _____ location is wheelchair-accessible. For sign interpretive services, call the xxxxx office at (phone number), at least 72 hours prior to the meeting on a weekday between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. Other special needs should be requested in the same manner with the same time requirement.

CERTIFICATION: I certify that this notice was posted on (legally designated posting place) no later than (time) on (date).

_____ Signature/Title

_____ Posting Time/Date

Resources to assist boards in reviewing meeting standards and guidelines can be found at:

"Open Meeting Laws and Advisory Committees"
http://www.openmeetinglaws.com/advisorycommittee.html

"Open Meetings 2010 Handbook"
https://www.oag.state.tx.us/AG_Publications/pdfs/openmeeting_hb.pdf

"The Texas Open Meetings Act at a Glance"
http://www.tml.org/legal_pdf/2006TXOpenMtngAct.pdf

B. Glossary of Library Terms, Acronyms, and Initialisms

Just as in any profession, libraries and librarians have their own language and terminology. To avoid problems, library directors and staff should take care to use a minimum of terms, acronyms, and initialisms in writing content for boards. Board members should be given definitions when appropriate, as well as legends, to information presented to them. A recommended resource for advisory board members is the Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science at http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis_A.aspx.

C. Resources

American Library Association (ALA)—advocates for the public's interest, supports library professionals in acquiring competencies for current and cutting-edge content, and supports libraries as centers for community culture and lifelong learning. Advisory board members need to be aware of the primary professional library association, ALA to keep up with trends in the profession, as well as having the latest links to legislation and advocacy initiative content at the national and state levels. http://www.ala.org

American Library Trustee Association (ALTA)—provides content and support through educational programs for library boards. Although "trustees" or governing boards are the centerpiece of the website, advisory boards will find a great deal of information to meet the needs of all sizes and types of libraries. http://www.ala.org/template.cfm?Section=alta

America's Children—is an annual report from the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) that typically focuses on the well-being of the nation's children and teenagers. The data provides advisory board members with extensive content (updated annually) for planning for an important public library constituent base. http://childstats.gov/americaschildren/

AmeriStat—offers data for planning that expands the advisory board member's area and constituent knowledge-base. Covered in this web environment are U.S. population issues and trends. Graphics and text are used to create an easy-to-use format of population estimates and projections, race and ethnicity, and income and poverty. http://www.ameristat.org/

Big Dog—is considered the best HR site on the web. This environment is a complete guide for managers, organizers, trainers and, in general, professionals. Board members can use the leadership materials, as well as extensive tips on meetings, facilitation of groups, and creative thinking. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/

CensusScope—offers data on U.S. demographic trends with graphics and exportable trend data. Board members can use this data to assist in strategic planning. http://www.censusscope.org/

Friends of Libraries, USA (FoLUSA)—offers support for stakeholders for public libraries. FoLUSA provides programs and publications to guide Friend's members in raising funds, advocating, and promoting libraries. http://www.folusa.com

The Foundation Center—offers extensive information on locating and getting grants. While current information is readily available, additional information can be found in the current and archived issues of the *Philanthropy News Digest* and in Foundation Center publications. In addition, an online librarian can answer questions. http://fdncenter.org/

Free Management Library—provides an interesting, massive list of resources to support nonprofit management, governing, and advisory boards. This site offers links to hundreds of forms, processes, and templates. http://managementhelp.org/

General Social Survey—is an excellent searchable site that tracks "trends in American attitudes, experiences, practices, and concerns." Subjects included are broad, and specific areas of interest include population, education, and statistics. It can also assist board members in strategic planning. http://www.norc.uchicago.edu/projects/gensoc.asp

Internet Public Library (IPL)—combined with *Librarians' Index to the Internet,* an extensive, well-organized set of resources with an excellent format and search engine. IPL is perfect for supporting management activities. For example, IPL provides professional content links to hundreds of websites for staff development and training. http://www.ipl.org

Library Law—although this site doesn't appear to be updated at first glance, the existing content links to information that is continuously updated. It provides a unique core of reference materials on library law and precedent for library law. This is a must for advisory board members for basic library content and information on policy and procedures. http://www.librarylaw.com

Library Laws of Texas—is an online compilation of Texas statutes relating to libraries and librarians. The annotated references provide links to the full statutes maintained at the Texas Legislative Council website Texas Legislature Online and to rules contained in the Texas Secretary of State website for the Texas Administrative Code.

Library Research Services (LRS)—gathers and presents library statistics and research for library professionals, public officials, and the media. LRS reports and analyzes statistics and conducts studies on major library issues. This information provides a base of information for working with media and designing public library strategic plans. http://www.lrs.org

Texas Library Association—TXLA is a nonprofit, membership organization that exists to support Texas library staff and supporters of Texas libraries. Not only is a group within TLA a major support group (see LIFTA), the association provides training and continuing education for board members and management documents, such as the *Intellectual Freedom Handbook.* http://www.txla.org

Urban Libraries Council—obviously, while all libraries do not have the same issues, much can be said about larger libraries of all types facing similar issues as well as urban academic libraries having the same issues as urban public libraries. The Urban Libraries Council website provides good information on trends, activities, and events for public libraries in metropolitan areas and the corporations that serve them. http://www.urbanlibraries.org/

WebJunction Texas—is an excellent resource and one of the most current sites on the web for public library-specific information, policies, discussions, webinars, archived webinars, and other content. Texas public library staff (board members included) can get access to 300+ free online courses by creating an account and affiliating with Texas at http://tx.webjunction.org/.

Texas State Library and Archives Commission

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