

Oklahoma Library Trustee Manual



OKLAHOMA
Department of
Libraries

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Congratulations, Public Library Trustee!

Public libraries build communities, making the quality of life better. It is a great honor and responsibility to serve on the board of a public library. Public libraries support early literacy, so children are ready to succeed in school. Libraries help people find jobs and start businesses. They help users find information on how to live healthy lives. Libraries are gathering places in the community so people can keep learning and growing.

Libraries and Communities Work Together

Public libraries, working with limited resources, have a challenging mission to be responsive to the needs of their communities. Public libraries must also strive to serve the variety of cultures, interests, and ethnic groups represented within their communities.

Your perspectives and guidance will help the library prioritize the many demands on its staff and services. People need new skills and continual learning to be competitive locally and globally.

You need a strong public library to build the community, to help library users, schools, and employers be successful.

The Department of Libraries Is Here to Help

The Department of Libraries works closely with Oklahoma's public libraries to support and improve service to local communities.

Boards are a vital part of public libraries, and we hope this trustee manual will give important information to you on your role as a library trustee, your legal responsibilities, powers and duties, and the support available to you.

The Oklahoma Department of Libraries has staff dedicated to serving your public library and helping you as a library trustee. Please contact us if we can help.

Purpose of the Oklahoma Library Trustee Manual

The purpose of this manual is to give trustees a basic understanding of their responsibilities and authority. The manual has information about policies, board and director relationships, funding, intellectual freedom, library laws and more.

**Library trustees help shape the future of Oklahoma Public Libraries.
We thank you.**

Trustee Job Description & Qualifications

You should get to know Oklahoma library laws, standards for libraries, and the principles and practices that ensure the library provides broad and equitable access to knowledge, information, and the diversity of ideas that community residents need. You should have:

- A serious commitment to being a library trustee
- A serious commitment to the provision of library services within your community
- The ability to attend regularly scheduled board meetings and be an active member of the board
- A commitment to freedom of expression and inquiry for all people

Board Activities

Attend Scheduled Meetings

Meetings are held at least quarterly. Be prepared. Read the agenda in advance and give thought to each item. Review notes from previous meetings. Be ready to listen, contribute, take notes, make decisions, and follow up.

Get To Know Your Fellow Trustees

Not just their names, but who they are—their interests, concerns, motivations. Team building starts by knowing your teammates.

Get To Know the Library Director

There must be a high level of trust between library trustees and the person who manages the library. Trustees and the director form the board team.

Know That This Job Deserves Your Very Best Effort

Although you are a volunteer, being a trustee of the library demands time and effort to do the best job.

Keep Learning About Libraries

Take part in board development opportunities, library conferences, and by reading about library services and trustee duties.

Be An Ambassador for the Library

Share the good news about library services and resources to the community.

Speak up for the library to neighbors, civic organizations, local and state government officials.

Library Boards in Oklahoma

Public libraries in Oklahoma are the responsibility of local government. As organizational entities, Oklahoma public libraries fall into three categories: city, county, and system.

City or County Libraries

City libraries are established by city ordinance. The library is supported by city sales tax, and other general revenue sources, and governed by the city council with recommendations from the library board. The legal services area is the city limits of the municipality. [\[see Appendix O\]](#)

County libraries are usually city libraries to which the county has given some funding to provide county-wide service.

City and county libraries can be called 'independent' libraries. This means that they are not affiliated with a library system; they are stand-alone libraries.

City or county public libraries are established by an ordinance adopted by the city council or county commission. The ordinance becomes the 'law' under which the library operates. The public library ordinance addresses such things as the required qualifications for trustees and their powers and duties. The Oklahoma Statutes (11 O.S. §31–104) address the powers and duties of library trustees by stating that "the library board shall have control and supervision of the library, may appoint a suitable librarian and remove the librarian, subject to approval of the municipal governing body, fix any fees to be charged and have such other powers as may be provided by ordinance."

Statutes also state that a city may appoint from five to nine trustees, who serve staggered terms of three years.

Boards that serve city or county libraries at the discretion of the municipality or county commission are advisory boards. Advisory boards have no legal responsibility except those granted by local government.

Advisory boards make recommendations and act as a liaison between the library, local government, and the community. They monitor library operations and advise on things like policies, plans, personnel, and the budget.

Most city and county library boards are advisory. Oklahoma Statutes (11 O.S: §31–102) state “the municipal governing body may, in its discretion and by ordinance, place the management and control of the public library under a library board of directors.”

The power and authority of these library boards in Oklahoma may fall anywhere along a continuum from advisory to governing. A board’s authority is determined by the city ordinance or by the understanding established over time between the board and the city council or county commission. It is important that the board understand where its authority lies on that continuum. As trustees and government officials change over time, it is necessary for both groups to work to keep such understandings and communicate them clearly.

System Libraries

Library systems are established by a vote of the people and supported by property tax millage of one to six mills per county. A governing board, appointed by the county commissioners and the cities within the system, oversees the system.

There are two single county library systems and six multi-county library systems in Oklahoma.

Public library systems in Oklahoma have governing boards that are legally responsible for the control and management of the library. These boards have broad administrative and policy-making duties that are specified in the Oklahoma Statutes. (65 O. S. § 4–105)

Governing boards have more power and authority than advisory boards and can make decisions about library services rather than simply make recommendations.

Per Oklahoma Statutes, System Boards can:

- Operate and maintain a system and adopt the necessary rules and regulations.
- Build, operate, and maintain public library buildings at more than one place.
- Accept transfer of any existing public library or libraries by lease or other conveyance.
- Acquire books, materials, and vehicles for libraries.
- Appoint a librarian for the system.
- Enter into agreements with school districts.
- Apply, contract, receive, and use funds.
- Accept or decline donations.
- Administer the expenditure of funds.
- Prepare an annual budget and file it with appropriate agencies.
- Borrow money.
- Establish a schedule of fees.
- Acquire, accept, hold, and convey real property and legal title to interest in real property.
- Purchase, lease or otherwise acquire land or buildings.
- Sell and dispose of system property.

There are four different types of ad valorem library systems created by voters: Multi-County, City-County, Metropolitan, and Single Country. Refer to statutes if you are a trustee of a library system.

Board Composition and Bylaws

Composition

Citizen boards oversee public libraries. Citizen oversight partly isolates the operation of the library from political pressure—an important concern especially in the development of your library’s collection and policies. Public library collections and policies have traditionally supported the ideals of freedom of expression and inquiry without any partisan or political pressures. Citizen control helps your library support these ideals. Another traditional public library ideal is that the library serves all members of the community equitably. A citizen board representing a cross section of the community should help your library do that. A library board composed of members with varying backgrounds and perspectives can contribute to the success of the library.

It is appropriate for the library board to suggest potential appointees to fill upcoming vacancies on the library board. When developing a list of candidates for appointment, keep in mind the importance of having a board that is representative of the whole community and any special need for added expertise on the library board.

The appointment, composition, and terms of office for city and county library boards must be in accordance with their individual ordinances. Single county and multi-county systems board makeup must follow Oklahoma Statutes. (65 O.S. §4–103 to 205)

If the library has a website, state law requires that public bodies make available on the website the names of members of governing bodies and “such other information about the members as the public body may choose to include.” (74 O.S. §3106.2C)

Bylaws

Building a strong library board does not happen by accident. It takes time, patience, good business practices, and team effort. Well-crafted bylaws help provide for the smooth and effective functioning of a library board. The bylaws are a set of rules that define operational procedures. The bylaws of a public library board must not conflict with federal or state laws or local ordinances. Boards should review bylaws annually and amend them as needed.

Take care when writing new bylaws or amending existing bylaws. Bylaw language must be clear and unambiguous. If your board wants to make new bylaws or amend existing bylaws, it is best to appoint a special committee to develop drafts for full board review. To change your bylaws, you must follow any procedures required by your current bylaws. Library staff may review drafts of new or amended bylaws

Sample bylaws documents may have:

-
- The name of the board
 - Membership: appointments, terms of office, compensation, removal, and vacancies
 - Director
 - Officers
 - Committees: standing, nominating, ad hoc
 - Duties
 - Meetings: attendance, schedule, special meetings, agendas, notices, minutes, quorum, laws, parliamentary procedure
 - Conflicts of Interest

Board Responsibilities

Unaffiliated Board Responsibilities

Oklahoma Statute (11 O.S. § 31–101, §31–108) designates the responsibilities of unaffiliated or municipal library boards. The six areas of activity the law relates to are: organization, meetings, budget, finances, staff, and administration. [see Appendix K]

Organization

- The board elects the chair, secretary, and other officers the board deems necessary.
- The secretary signs the minutes of meetings, and the board approves.
- The chair creates and appoints standing subcommittees for personnel, budget, and finance.
- The board can make ad hoc committees as needed.

Meetings

The board decides on the time and place for meetings per the city's library ordinance.

The library director files a list of meeting times and places with City Clerk and with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

Public notice of the date, time, place, and agenda of the board meeting must be physically posted outside the board's meeting room 24 hours in advance of the meeting. If the library has a website, state law requires a public body to also post the agenda and other information there. (74 O.S. §3106.2A).

Budget

- The budget and finance subcommittee prepares a budget jointly with librarian.
- The board discusses and approves the budget. They present the budget to the city official who oversees the library. The budget then goes to the City Council for approval.
- Board involvement may vary by municipality.

Finances

The library director informs the board of library expenditures.

Staff

If the municipality allows, trustees can be involved in appointing and evaluating the director.

Administration

The board adopts policies after review and discussion.

The board reviews established policies to find if the library is protected, as well as fairly and equitably serving the community.

Organization

Officers

Library board officers keep the group on task, maintain the proper procedures, encourage discussion, and facilitate good decision making by the group. Board officers serve as leaders for the board. [see Appendix N]

Boards grow from different traditions and have different ideas about the type and number of officers they need. A board may have some or all the types of the officers described here. The job responsibilities of board officers may also vary from board to board

Board officers, particularly the chairperson, should have respect of the rest of the board. Officers must be willing to give the time needed to carry the extra duties of the office and must have strong leadership skills. Officers should also have some experience being on the board. If you are asked to be a candidate for a board office, consider carefully if you have the time and the leadership skills to do the job well.

A good way to maintain an effective board is to do a self-evaluation. You can do this as an individual or as a board. [\[see Appendix P\]](#)

Chairperson

Most board leaders are called either the chairperson or the president of the board. In Oklahoma, chairperson is more common. The board chair has equal power with that of any other trustee. Any power exercised by the chair alone must be granted first by the full board.

The chair works with the director to plan the meeting agenda. The chair keeps an overall view of the board's and library's yearly activities and ensures that the board is completing its duties set by board policy or law.

The chair ensures adherence to the agenda and completion of items on the agenda. He or she also ensures fair participation for all trustees and fair exposure to all sides of an issue. The chair keeps the meetings going forward in a professional and timely way that moves the board to action on the issues.

The chair traditionally has the power to appoint trustees and others to committees, with board consent. To do this well, the chair must have a clear understanding of each trustee's skills, strengths, and interests to make appropriate assignments. The chair makes sure that committee assignments are clear and holds committees accountable to do the job assigned. The chair may be an ex-officio member of a committee.

The board must work as a team. It is the duty of the chair to promote teamwork among trustees. At times it may be necessary for the chair to mediate and counsel fellow trustees if the board fails to work as a team.

Vice-Chairperson

The vice-chair of the board traditionally serves as the backup for the board chair. Yet, the vice-chair usually has specific duties, such as chairing a committee, taking charge of board development activities or preparing for special board events.

The vice-chair works with the chair to stay current on library business and board operations, so that the vice-chair can assume the chair's duties, if the chair cannot carry them out. The vice-chair is often considered to be the logical successor to the chair when the current chair leaves the position and is often referred to as the chair-elect.

Treasurer

The treasurer of the board is responsible for review of the expenditures, presentation to the full board of the library's budget and financial condition, and acceptance of the expenditures if prescribed in the board's bylaws.

Secretary

The size and complexity of library business has changed over the years, so should the traditional role of board secretary. All trustees should participate in deliberations. It can be difficult for the board secretary

to participate in board business and take minutes at the same time. The library director can take on that responsibility and act as secretary.

Meetings

Trustees do not have authority as individuals. A board committee cannot act on behalf of the full board. Only actions approved by the full board have legal authority. Likewise, individual trustees and board officers can only carry out official actions on behalf of the board with specific authorization from the full board.

In many cases, a majority of the membership of a library board makes up a quorum. The library board may set its own definition of a quorum (the minimum number of members that must be present to conduct business) in its bylaws. [\[see Appendix N\]](#)

If there is not a quorum, the board can meet, listen to reports, and discuss business but cannot vote on any measure.

Legal responsibility for overall library operations rests in the library board, not individual trustees. So, it is important for the board chair to use leadership techniques that promote group decision making on the part of the whole library board, not decision making by a few trustees or the director, or any other individual.

Only legally appointed library trustees can vote on board matters. Some library boards may consider certain officials ex officio trustees, such as the library director or city manager. However, no other government official or person who is not appointed to the board is legally authorized to vote on library board matters.

Open Meeting Laws

The library board's work is done in board meetings and committee meetings. What takes place in board meetings can make the difference between an effective or ineffective board.

Any meeting of a public board in Oklahoma is subject to the Open Meeting law, Oklahoma Statutes (25 O.S. § 301 et seq.). Public libraries, like other tax-supported agencies, operate in the best interest of the public. The Open Meeting law requires that all meetings be held in public. This law is designed to protect the public from secret dealings by public agency boards. Public notice of the date, time, and place of regular meetings, or rescheduled or reconvened meetings, must be posted at least 24 hours before the meeting. This statute protects against abuse of public power.

The Office of the Oklahoma Attorney General has free training for the public on Open Meeting and Open Records law to help public bodies to conform to the law. The Oklahoma Press Association publishes the Oklahoma Open Meeting & Open Records Book, which has the whole text of the Oklahoma Open Meeting and Open Records laws, as amended, as well as court rulings and Attorney General Opinions.

It is sometimes difficult for trustees to hold a meeting and speak candidly in the presence of the public or the media. Trustees may feel that they must be responsive to those listening, and the result can be deliberation that seems aimed more at the audience than at the rest of the board team. Some trustees may be so intimidated by an audience that they don't speak, and all sides of an issue may not be considered.

Trying to find a way around the Open Meeting law is illegal and unnecessary. The board can function well in the open and within the law.

Open Meeting Law Tips

The Board Represents Many People

The people who show up at a board meeting usually represent a small percentage of constituents and should not have an undue influence on a trustee's actions.

Set a Clear Policy for Managing Public Forums

If there is a public forum section of the agenda, it should be short and have strict rules for those who speak to the board. Board policy should state the time limit per person for public comment and that the board will listen, but will not respond, during the meeting to those who speak during the open forum.

This is a time for listening, not debate. If there is need for response from the board, it should come later, when the board has had time to deliberate the issue, seek more information, or take recommendations from the director.

A Board Meeting Is Held in Public, But It Is Not a Public Meeting

The public and possible media representatives are there to watch the board work, not to participate in the board meeting.

Members Meeting Responsibilities

- Attend all meetings.
- Prepare well for meetings.
- Take part in all discussions.
- Cooperate with fellow trustees to make meetings work.
- Understand the basics of parliamentary procedure.
- Know state laws that apply to your meetings and then follow those laws.
- Learn traditional meeting practices of the board and follow them.
- Practice the art of compromise.
- Practice the art of listening and merging your comments with those of the other trustees.
- Work toward consensus on issues.
- Focus all deliberations on the ultimate mission of the library and the best interests of those you serve.
- Publicly support board decisions.

As a show of respect, members should arrive early and start the meeting on time. Study the agenda and decide how much time each item might need. Let trustees know how long the meeting may last and then try to end on time.

Preparation for Meetings

The work done before each board meeting has a bearing on the effectiveness of the board.

The board chair and library director work together to prepare and send out meeting materials before each meeting. Typically, the library director will contact the board chair to discuss planned agenda subjects (including any items from past meetings' board actions).

The chair can add agenda items. Trustees who want to bring an item before the board should contact the board chair. An annual library board calendar can help your board meet important deadlines.

The library director usually drafts the agenda and gathers materials for the board packet.

The board packet should have:

- Minutes of the previous meeting
- The financial report
- Expenditures (if reviewed by the board)
- A detailed agenda
- Any other background materials needed to inform the board

Having detailed written information before meetings gives trustees time to consider the issues up for discussion. Sending written reports to the board before the meeting (such as the director’s report and any committee reports) will save valuable meeting time for board questions and discussion.

Trustees can contribute best if they have taken the time to study the agenda and background materials before each meeting. [\[see Appendix M\]](#)

Meeting Procedures

Use Parliamentary Rules

Conduct meetings according to established parliamentary rules, such as Robert’s Rules of Order. The rules help to:

- Establish a businesslike and courteous tone.
- Allow for discussion.
- Protect the right of all trustees to be heard on the issues.
- Enable the chair to maintain control of the discussion.

When in doubt about how to proceed, the board should consult the parliamentary guide specified in the board bylaws.

Set Up Ground Rules in the Board Bylaws

Bylaws save the board from facing the same questions and issues over and over. Bylaws give consistency and order. They set rules for participation, like time limits for speakers and how to decide issues when there is disagreement. Bylaws answer important questions like what makes up a quorum, how often the board meets, and who takes the minutes.

The Board Chair

The board chair should follow the rules and the agenda, move the discussion along, keep on track, encourage all to participate, review and clarify when necessary, and be fair. Make assignments clear. Review and clarify any action assignments at the end of the meeting so there is no doubt what is expected of whom and when it is due.

It is okay to be assertive, but also be polite and considerate. No one member should dominate the meeting. For follow up, send copies of the minutes to each member. The chair should check to see that members are working on action assignments.

Meeting Minutes

The minutes of the meeting, after approved by a formal vote or by consensus of the board, are the official legal record of what happened at the board meeting. The Oklahoma Open Records law (51 O.S. § 24A.1–et seq) (see Appendix I) ensures that the public has access to this record of board actions. The minutes are an important way of communication between the board and constituents.

This law allows the public to have access to:

- Board meeting minutes
- Names and salaries of library employees
- Library policies
- Records of income and expenses
- Other information

The board should set a procedure for handling requests for information, keeping in mind the Oklahoma Confidentiality laws. (51 O.S. §24A.7–11 & 65 O.S. §1–105) [\[see Appendix D\]](#)

If the board is unsure how to respond to a request for information, it should contact its city attorney or other legal counsel for clarification. The Oklahoma Department of Libraries may be another resource.

A trustee should ask the board to correct errors in the minutes before the board accepts the minutes as a record of the previous meeting. Detailed views about an issue or the trustee's reason for voting a certain way should not be recorded in the minutes.

Board Reports

During the meeting, members will hear reports from the director, the staff and maybe from committees. The reports give the background information that the board needs to carry out its duties and deal with issues on the agenda. Sometimes reports will end with a recommendation for board action. Send these reports in the agenda packet, so that trustees can read them before the meeting and be ready to take action. Those presenting reports will simply highlight information, clarify items, and answer questions.

Making Motions

A motion is a formal request for the board to take action. Motions usually come from either committee reports or library director recommendations, but trustees may make motions at any time, per parliamentary procedure. To make a motion, the member addresses the chair and says, "I move that" and states the action he or she wants the board to take. The board chair does not make motions. Another trustee must second the motion to support the call for action.

The chair then restates the motion and starts the discussion. Some motions, such as the motion to adjourn, do not need discussion. After a motion is made and seconded, the board can freely discuss all the pros and cons of an issue. All members of the board should try to keep the discussion moving toward a decision.

After discussion, the chair will call for a vote on the motion. In all meetings of public bodies, the vote of each member must be publicly cast and recorded. (25 O.S., § 305)

A vote may be taken by:

- Roll call
- Saying "aye" or "nay"
- Show of hands'

A member can abstain on a motion when there is a conflict of interest on the issue before the board. Members must vote or state why they are abstaining. Once a vote is taken, the chair will declare that the motion passes or fails. On completion of an agenda item, the chair moves on to the next item.

Votes are recorded in the minutes.

Committee Assignments

Some issues go to board committees for study. Committees make recommendations to the full board.

A committee is a good place for members to offer expertise or special knowledge they may have, but service on committees is not limited to the experts. Committee service is one way to learn more about the library. The board should get regular reports from each committee. The committee reports should explain what the committee has been doing for the board and make recommendations for board action. The board may have standing committees, described in the bylaws, that are in place year-round. As certain important issues arise, the board may appoint temporary 'ad hoc' committees to study those issues for the board.

The board may accept many committee recommendations, but the board must not feel obligated to accept all committee recommendations. Committees study issues and make recommendations. The board makes decisions.

Decision Making

Legal responsibility for board operations rests in the library board, not individual trustees. The chair's leadership skills and techniques should promote effective group discussions. Decisions should not be dominated by a few members, the director, or any other individual.

The board will make balanced decisions through a logical, common-sense process that includes pertinent information, expert advice, experience, vision, and exchange of ideas. Deliberations should follow this process:

Define the Issue Clearly

Place a motion on the table so that everyone can focus on it. The chair makes sure that all trustees understand the intent or meaning of the motion.

Look at the Information

Prime sources of information and insight come from the experience of the board and reports from the director, staff, and various committees. Outside experts are also valuable.

Trustees are not appointed for their expertise and experience in running a library, but rather for their ability to ask the right questions, draw upon their experience and leadership skills and make informed decisions for the good of the library and the community.

Consider the Alternatives

Approach every issue with an open mind, believing that there is more than one side to every issue. What seems obvious at first may prove to have serious consequences later.

Ask tough questions and encourage others to voice opinions even though they might disagree with the majority. Look closely at other possibilities, even when there is a strong recommendation. Either the director, the committee, or both should make a list of alternatives to consider.

Seek Help

The library director should give a recommendation on all issues. Seek help from specialists, attorneys, and any other people outside the board who can help make decisions. Yet, the board has the ultimate responsibility.

Consider Your Mission and Long-Range Goals

Every decision should be in line with the mission of the library and its long-range plan. Every decision made should be for the greatest good and for those who use the library.

Reach a Decision

Set aside personal bias and emotions and vote for what you think is the best decision for the library. If you have a conflict of interest, you should not vote.

Trustees may not always agree on the issue. Each must make his or her own best decision and accept the decision of the majority of the board.

Many decisions are by consensus. Consensus means that all trustees will support a decision on an issue, even though it may not be each trustee's first choice.

To reach consensus, members discuss an issue until all members reach agreement. This is a time consuming and difficult way of decision making, but it has advantages over the majority vote.

Building consensus avoids splits among trustees and forces a board to discuss an issue more thoroughly. Compromise is at the heart of arriving at consensus on any issue.

Ethics and Conflict of Interest

The public expects a trustee to act above reproach and in the interest of the public good. It is good practice for the board to adopt a code of ethics to guide its members and to review it whenever a new member joins. Most boards will rarely have situations that call for ethics concerns. Familiarity with local and state laws will alert you to potential problems. Members should keep in mind the potential damage to the library's reputation if any trustee or staff member acts in a way that appears to have a conflict of interest. Ethics and conflict of interest laws are complex. If you have concerns about the rightness of an action, seek advice from the city attorney.

What if you, as a trustee, have a conflict of interest on an action or issue at a library board meeting? If this occurs, you should not take part in the meeting. You should not be present for discussion, deliberation, or vote. The meeting minutes should state your absence from that part of the meeting.

The American Library Association has developed a Code of Ethics. The Code of Ethics is the document that translates the values of intellectual freedom that define the profession of librarianship into broad principles that may be used by individual members of that profession as well as by others employed in a library as a framework for dealing with situations involving ethical conflicts. [\[see Appendix C\]](#)

**A Code of Ethics helps trustees make ethical decisions.
It addresses equal access, intellectual freedom, and protecting privacy.**

Administration: Budget and Finances

Trustees need to know where the money comes from and how much revenue to expect to understand the budgeting process and approve an annual budget for the library. Trustees must encourage stable funding and find new sources. [see Appendix A]

Public libraries get funding from city or county revenue streams. Library boards must stay informed about sources and types of funding.

Funding

Operating Funding

Independent or non-system public libraries in Oklahoma get their main funding from the city's General Fund, raised by levying sales tax. A few city libraries get a small amount of funding from the county. These funds are raised through property taxes or other sources like utility operations.

State Aid Funding

Since 1968, the Oklahoma Legislature has authorized the Oklahoma Department of Libraries to issue state aid payments to public libraries. Each year the ODL board adopts the allocations for state aid payments.

The allocations vary from year to year. The allocation formula has a per capita figure and a per square mile figure.

For eligibility the library must meet the Rules and Regulations for State Aid and agree to serve the whole county without charge. Library boards should be familiar with the Rules and Regulations. Libraries may spend state aid funds on library materials, equipment, furniture, salaries, and more. Libraries may not spend aid on construction, remodeling, land, vehicles, or anything that will become a permanent part of the building, such as carpet or air conditioning.

Library Trusts

The library board can take outside funds without setting up a foundation but should consider asking the city to set up a library trust. That way the library can use funds as it likes or as the donor wished.

IMLS LSTA Funding

If a library qualifies for state aid, it may then apply for federal LSTA grants through ODL. The Library Service and Technology Act (LSTA) authorizes federal aid for all types of libraries. The Institute of Museums and Library Services (IMLS) administers LSTA. ODL gets this LSTA grant from IMLS every year. These funds are used to develop, expand, and promote programs that enhance and improve library services statewide.

Friends' Groups

Libraries can seek funding outside the city general fund. The board can set up a Friends group to manage donations. Libraries often encourage citizens to set up Friends groups to promote public relations and good will for the library, as well as to raise money for special projects.

The Friends group can seek 501c3 status from the Internal Revenue Service. Having 501c3 status has advantages. Contributions are tax deductible. And many foundations make awards to non-profit organizations, rather than to a tax-supported entity.

Private Grants

Private foundations, businesses, and corporations may give grants to help libraries with programs, services, and building projects. Often the grants are from local or regional organizations, or businesses that wish to give something back to their communities.

Budget Planning

A budget is a plan for the expenditure of funds for the next year to carry out the library's operation.

The board has a clear responsibility to ensure that public funds are used in the best interest of the community and that the library has the financing to continue its programs and services. The budget plan should be clear, accurate, consistent, and comprehensive.

Know Who Does What

The board should know who has authority and who does what in the budget planning process. Written policies and procedures should outline responsibilities and roles clearly. Budget preparation is a cooperative process involving trustees, the library director, library staff, and designated city officials.

The director is responsible for preparing the budget request. The board of trustees is responsible for reviewing and approving the budget to submit to the city for approval.

Understand the Planning Context

The budget must reflect the purpose and priorities of the library.

Give Yourself and Others Time

Allow for time to develop the budget and for consideration by the local funding authorities.

Tie Budget to Mission

The budget is a tool for carrying out specific goals. It should support the library's overall long-range plan.

Be Realistic

Understand the climate of the community. Know what to expect by way of library support. Trustees should understand the competing demands of other city departments

Seek Other Funding

Not all money must come from the local government. Look for grants, donations, sponsors, and the community for other funding as well.

Be Accountable

The library should have a clear mission and be accountable. If the mission states a role the library will play in the community, the budget should support that role.

Keep It Simple and Truthful

The library's needs should be easy to understand. Be mindful of credibility. If the board or the director says something will happen if the budget is cut, they must be sure that it will, indeed, happen.

The Budget Is Public Information

The community has a right to know how their money is spent. The budget must be understandable. Use simple and familiar comparisons to show the value people are getting for their tax dollars.

Learn from Others

Learn how other departments or agencies present their budgets. Find out what the funding agency is looking for and what impresses them.

Present the Budget

The board must justify the budget (the increases and the effects of decreases, as well as the budget base). The community needs to know the "why" for the services. The board should be able to describe the library's contributions and benefits to the community.

Budget Preparation Steps

Budget Activity	Who Is Responsible
Develop a budget calendar with key dates for completion, definition of tasks and assignment of responsibilities.	Director and staff
Review the library's long-range plan, goals, objectives, community needs, economic conditions, and trends.	Board, director, and staff
Evaluate programs and services to find needed changes and review past year's actual costs.	Board, director, and staff

Finances

The board helps develop, review, and approve library expenditures to the extent the city allows. The board develops policies for handling gifts and donations.

Library expenditures of city funds are made from disbursements by the city's fiscal officer. The board should remember that the library is a city department and is under the city's procurement, accountability, and reporting policies and procedures. The library director is a city department head and needs the board's advocacy and support in budgetary matters.

Administration: Library Staff Relations

The working relationships that prevail within the library set the attitudes of the staff, which in turn affect the quality and tone of service offered to the public. Chief among these working relationships is the one between the director and the trustees. Creating a climate of understanding, trust, and cordial cooperation starts with this partnership.

A key to a smooth working relationship is knowing the responsibilities of both parties.

Board	Director
Makes director hiring recommendations, works toward cooperative and supportive relationship, seeks advice, and involves director in decision making	Hires staff per board policy, city policy and employment laws
Evaluates director's performance	Along with city, responsible for safe and organized working environment
Cooperates with local government to offer competitive salaries and benefits for staff	Prepares annual budget that includes staff expenditures
Complies with local government personnel policies. Aware of employment laws	Carries out board policies, recommends changes when needed, particularly when it comes to staff
Recommends qualified and diverse candidates for the board, notifying local government when there are open positions	Maintains personnel files, reviews job descriptions, and makes changes to the board when needed
Provides continuing education incentives and opportunities, encourages professional development of all staff	Allows and plans for staff training
Advocates for the library and its staff with local city officials and the community Makes sure that the director evaluates all staff	Represents the library staff with city Supervises, evaluates, and fires staff per city policy and employment laws

Your job as a library trustee is to make sure the library operates well and in the best interest of those the library serves. The board must hire a qualified director to manage the day-to-day operations of the library. Selecting a competent library director can be the single most important act by the board. Trustees should be aware of applicable laws and regulations and competitive salaries and benefits. The board should work closely with local government officials to assure good communication and compliance with local hiring rules and regulations.

Hiring the Library Director

Find out what the city is expecting of the board in the hiring process. If the city gives the board control, it should follow these steps.

Name a Search Committee

The committee will write or revise a job description, job ad or more. The board should clarify with the city the appropriate roles, responsibilities, and authority for the recruitment, hiring, timetable, and salary. An exit interview with the outgoing director may be helpful. Consider the activities, responsibilities, and expertise that the job requires. List desirable qualifications set by the city, the board, and State Aid Rules.

Advertise the Job

Since the director is a city employee, it will be up to the city to advertise formally for the position, but the board can also make the position known throughout the community and encourage applicants. An Equal Opportunity Employer statement may be required. Ads should include the job title, duties, qualifications, salary, timelines, and a contact person.

Screening Job Candidates

Agree in advance on the methods for screening, ranking, requesting references, and evaluating the applicants. The board or board committee then checks references of applicants, evaluates qualifications, and arranges interviews with promising candidates. Write a set list of interview questions. Be sure to have these questions reviewed by someone knowledgeable about employment and discrimination law. Have procedures in place for contacting references.

Prepare to Interview

Once you have the candidates, let the other applicants know that decision. Prepare for interviews. Consider sending background information on the library and community to the final candidates. This could have the library mission, policy manual, goals and objectives and budgets for the last several years.

Give enough time for discussion and don't schedule too many interviews in one day. The interview is a mutual evaluation. The search committee should share with all candidates the bad and the good sides of the position.

Review and Rank Candidates

After the interviews, the committee meets to review the interviews and references, discuss responses, and rank the candidates in order of preference. Agree on a candidate and then officially notify the successful candidate. A written notice that has agreed upon title, salary, employment conditions and deadlines is very important. The candidate should also reply in writing. Once the chosen candidate has accepted, notify other candidates at once.

Announce the New Director

Introduce the new director to trustees, the staff, community leaders, and government officials. Announce the new director in a press release. Consider having a library open house reception. Give the new director background information, policies, budgets, minutes, manuals, reports, and more.

Probation and Evaluation

The city may set the length of the probation. A six month to one-year probationary time is common and advisable. Do a midpoint performance evaluation. Do another evaluation at the end of the probation and decide whether to keep or dismiss the director.

Evaluating the Library Director

Evaluating the library director is often one of the more difficult tasks for a public library board, but it doesn't need to be. It is only difficult when a board is unsure of the process or the criteria to evaluate the director's job performance.

There are many good reasons for an evaluation of your library director. A review gives the director formal feedback on his or her job performance. It can be a tool for motivation and direction. The review can give the board valuable information about the operations and performance of the library. It can help set a record of unacceptable performance if there is ever a cause to discipline or dismiss the director. The review can help the board and the director evaluate the job description and adjust it. There are many ways to evaluate. The board should try to develop criteria that is objective and measurable.

Base the performance review on these factors:

1. The director's performance as it relates to a written job description
2. A list of objectives for the past year, written with the director and the board
3. The success of the library in carrying out services, and the director's contributions to that success

There is no perfect evaluation formula. The method devised should reflect local circumstances. Evaluation is continuous, but a formal method usually begins with the director and the board developing a list of performance criteria that are drawn from the job description and lend themselves to objective evaluation. Performance objectives may be identified and negotiated. A rating scale or form may be devised.

After criteria are set, the library director periodically reports to the board on progress toward meeting performance objectives and priorities which may be adjusted according to the library's changing situation. At least once a year, a formal evaluation review is held. This should be done in a positive spirit. If desired, accomplishments and expectations are noted in a written document. The process is repeated annually. It may be repeated more often, if necessary.

The board should reward good performance or work to correct inadequate performance. If problems arise with the library director's performance during the year, the board should discuss these problems with the director at that time, along with possible solutions. At the time of the annual evaluation there should be no surprises. [\[See Appendix J\]](#)

Dismissing the Director

Probably the most painful situation a public library board can face is the dismissal of the director. Boards that hire carefully, communicate well, nurture positive working relationships, and evaluate effectively should not have to experience this unpleasant task. When problems cannot be resolved and the relationship between the director and the board reaches a point where it cannot continue, dismissal becomes a last resort.

Directors are usually dismissed only after:

- Serious infractions of board policy
- Violation of the law
- Very poor performance coupled with unwillingness or inability to improve

It is important that reasons for dismissal are based on board policy and are carefully documented. The board has a responsibility to ensure that personalities and biases are not leading factors in any dismissal decision. The city's policies and procedures should explicitly describe the dismissal and appeals process. Allow the director a full hearing to discuss specific charges.

A board should not start a dismissal process unless they:

- Understand its implications
- Have consulted with the right local government officials
- Believe their position is defensible
- Have gotten legal advice from city or county attorneys

Board and Library Staff Relations

The board has no direct responsibility for day-to-day supervision of staff other than overseeing the director. Trustees have no authority to issue orders to staff or make demands of staff except through the director. The board has no direct responsibility for assessing staff performance.

Only the director reports to the board. The director is responsible for hiring, supervising, evaluating, disciplining, and dismissing staff. The director is accountable to the board for the performance of all staff. Employees need to clearly understand who gives the orders, who is accountable to whom, and who has responsibility for what. To do that, the board creates clear lines of authority and accountability for employees. Staff members sometimes go around the director and take concerns and complaints directly to the board or to individual trustees. It is the trustee's responsibility to remind the staff member about the proper procedure for concerns or complaints. The board does not act on complaints from the staff, except through a grievance procedure that is board policy. If staff take concerns or complaints to you, as a trustee, report it to the director for resolution. Keep good staff by budgeting and advocating for reasonable pay and benefits and by recognizing good staff performance.

Administration: Policies

Policy making is one of the board's most important responsibilities. Policies are important tools to provide effective service to the community. Policies reflect the library's philosophy of service and explain the reasons for setting rules and limitations. To be effective and justifiable, policies must be well-designed, well-written, and be consistent and fair. [For a list of suggested policies see Appendix H.]

Why have policies?

Policies guide the daily operation of the library and the decision making of the director and staff. Basically, policies are the framework for library operations and services. A library must work to consistently meet public expectations. A set of well-defined, well-written policies is important to a public library. Policies help:

- Guide trustees and staff in carrying out duties.
- Communicate privileges and duties regarding library use to the public.
- Ensure fair treatment of patrons and staff.
- Ensure quality service to meet community needs.
- Ensure conformity to local, state, and federal laws.

Every library needs basic policies to operate.

Who writes policies?

A new problem or library need may prompt the need for a new policy. The library director, with staff input, writes policies. The board discusses, revises, and approves policies. Policies go to the city council for approval before taking effect. The director makes the staff and public aware of the new policies.

The board should regularly review all policies. State aid performance measures require each library to review its policies at least every four years.

How to Set Policies

Policy making gives the trustees, director, and staff a good opportunity to understand the library's community, to weigh the library's strengths and weaknesses, to reach consensus on the library's purposes and priorities, to strengthen relationships, and to communicate the library's needs and achievements to the community. Policy making that achieves so many goals must have board participation.

Policy making starts with a statement of the issue the policy will address. Key questions are:

- How does this policy contribute to the mission and goals of the library?
- What needs and reasons are there to change this policy or make a new one?

Typically, the board will assign a committee to do an assessment of the issue and an analysis of the problems. This committee may have the director, staff members, and trustees. The committee should consider:

- Long- and short-range effects of enacting the policy
- Possible positive and negative effects
- Estimated costs of carrying out the policy
- Budget
- Staff resources
- Building and equipment requirements
- Collection implications
- Library perception
- Legal implications of enacting the policy

The committee reports to the whole board with recommendations, documents, and a policy draft for consideration. The board reviews the committee's work and recommendations and makes the decisions that will shape the final policy. The board reviews and discusses the policy draft. The board completes the final draft and formally adopts the policy in a meeting. Next, the policy goes to the city council for adoption.

Introduce the new policy to the staff and public. Publish the policy and send it out to anyone it may affect or who needs to know. Oklahoma Statute (74 O.S., § 3106.4), says that public bodies must publish the rules, regulations, and statutes they follow on their websites. Policies fall into this law.

It is important for policies to be legal. Illegal policies can open the municipality to liability. There are four tests of a legally defensible policy:

- Policies must comply with current statutes and case law.
- Policies must be reasonable (and all penalties must be reasonable).
- Policies must be clear, not ambiguous, or vague.
- Policies must be applied without discrimination.

It is helpful to review the policies of other libraries. Contact libraries in your area or ask an ODL consultant for copies of established policies.

Administration: Intellectual Freedom & Challenges

Intellectual Freedom

Free access to ideas and freedom of expression are basic principles of this country. Public libraries are institutions dedicated to freedom of expression and inquiry. The public library offers all citizens access to a full range of ideas, including controversial or unpopular ones.

Your library, within budget, time and space limits, should try to represent the widest range of materials, format, and access to resources. This will foster inquiry and creativity. Having a library board with citizen trustees should help insulate the library and its operation from political whims or pressure. Citizen control is designed to help your library support the ideals of freedom of expression and inquiry, free from partisan and political pressure.

Collection Development

The board and the director write the collection development policy, sometimes called the materials selection policy. The library is a selector, not a censor. A selector believes in the individual's right to examine and evaluate materials and make personal choices. A censor believes in examining, evaluating, and choosing materials for others.

This policy supports the right of all members of the community to have access to a wide range of materials, even if that includes something some people might find offensive.

A sound collection development policy assures the growth of a collection in line with your library's defined mission and goals while recognizing the diversity of your community.

The Collection Policy Covers:

- Purpose and scope of collection
- Types of materials the library adds or buys
- Staff responsibility for selection
- Use of professional selection tools
- Reasons and ways for withdrawing and disposing of items
- The gifts or donations the library takes
- Affirmation of intellectual freedom—Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read, Freedom to View statements from the American Library Association (See the Appendix)

Internet Access

The Internet brings a wealth of information, but it also brings challenges. Every library needs an Internet Acceptable Use Policy. When drafting such a policy, consider or ask:

- Does the library comply with the Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA)?
- Can children use the Internet by themselves, or do they need parental supervision or permission? How old do children need to be?
- Will the library have a code of conduct agreement that users must sign? Or parents sign for children?
- What are the consequences of misusing the Internet or hardware?

- How does the library define acceptable Internet activities?
- Will users have to sign up to use the Internet?
- Will there be time limits?
- Will users' screens be visible to others?
- What does the library do when a user is improperly or illegally using the Internet?
- How will the library handle complaints?

The board should know that certain Internet filtering policies may violate First Amendment rights. The Children's Internet Protection Act requires library filtering to qualify for certain uses of LSTA federal aid and for funding from the federal E-rate program.

Challenges

As a trustee, one of the most difficult tasks is dealing with an objection to materials in the library's collection or an objection to library policies. [\[see Appendix B\]](#)

If the library faces a challenge, trustees should:

- Defend the selection policy
- Respond responsibly
- Consider the rights of the whole community
- Be sensitive and empathetic

Having a written policy in place that specifies the procedure for handling challenges or complaints is a must. It should give the first steps the staff should take. In many cases, the issue can be resolved at that point. Yet, there may be times when the board gets involved more directly.

It is important for you as a trustee to be committed to the principles of freedom of expression and inquiry that are fundamental to the role of public libraries. The whole community benefits when democratic institutions uphold the right of access to information. Public libraries are for everyone and for every inquiry and must offer materials with varying points of view and a wide range of subjects.

To help deal with challenges, have a written set of steps to follow:

- The library director informs the complainant of the challenge process and that he or she has the right to use that process.
- The director examines the item and information, like reviews, about the item or like items.
- The director decides whether to keep, move, or withdraw the item.
- The director writes the complainant with the decision and explanation within a certain number of days of getting the complaint.
- If the complainant is not satisfied, he or she can appeal to the board. The board sets up a committee with members, library staff, and perhaps community members to review the material.
- The board considers the committee's recommendation.
- The board may decide to hold a public meeting.
- The board makes a final decision on the material.

You should not express your own personal views to an individual citizen. If someone comes to you with a complaint or challenge, refer the person to the library director. Your library's policy for dealing with challenges should specify that deliberations involving trustees will happen at open board meetings. It should also specify that there is an official spokesperson (often the library director or board chair). Information, especially to the media, will come through the spokesperson.

If the board holds a public hearing, it is important for trustees to listen carefully and not debate during the presentation. They should also defer any decision on the challenge until a later meeting. Schedule this meeting soon after the hearing but allow time for trustees to consider the issues in a less emotional climate.

You may eventually make your views known through a vote that will decide the outcome. This is the time to make a public statement giving the reasons for your vote. A public statement is not mandatory, but it gives trustees a forum to restate the principles of intellectual freedom, and why you do (or do not) support them in this instance. Once the board has decided the outcome, there is usually no further recourse for action by the challenger except a court case.

A formal challenge can be an opportunity for growth for all parties. Having a policy in place that describes the challenge process and the responsibilities of the various participants in a challenge will make it much easier for you and your fellow trustees to deal with censorship attempts.

Administration: Planning and Evaluating

Planning focuses on specific community needs the library can address. A good long-range plan is visionary, but it is also based on real community analysis. The challenge is to make a carefully considered written plan. The purpose of planning is to anticipate both opportunities and concerns. Open-mindedness and creativity are key in making a plan that guides the most effective use of library resources.

Basic Planning Questions:

- What does our community look like now?
- What do we want our community to be in the future?
- What is the role or purpose of the public library in the community?
- What do our customers want from us?
- What does success look like for us?
- How will we get there and what is our timetable?
- What staff, collections, facilities, technology, and other resources will we need to achieve our planned goals and objectives?

Every library needs a plan no matter how small or large the library and the community is. First-time planners may want to progress through a simplified, less time-intensive process. Even a simplified process will help the board and staff gain information, experience, and confidence that will help with the next plan. ODL library consultants can help in planning.

Get input from many people and the plan will benefit. The library director and staff gather community and library statistics.

Community and Library Statistics

Community Information

- Population size in categories like age, gender, racial heritage
- Existence of large or growing groups of newcomers, new ethnic groups
- Economic factors such as household income and payroll sources
- Educational profile

Library Information

- Services the library offers
- Changes in how people use the library
- Composition of the collection
- Age and condition of the collection

Hearing from the Public Will Help Planning

Hearing from people from the community will strengthen and give credibility to the plan. It helps with public buy-in as well. Discuss their community needs and the direction they would like the library to take. You may like to invite:

- Mayor, city council, economic development officer, other city staff
- Educational representatives
- Service groups representatives
- Social organization representatives—such as growing minority populations
- Religious community
- Current library users and non-users
- People who represent different ages and genders

Once you have basic information and have heard from the public, it's time to put your plan together. See how the library compares with other libraries of its size. You can find out how it fits into other guidelines issued by the state library. The consultant can give you data about other libraries' operations and planning.

Simple Plan Structure

Introduction

- Discuss the planning process.
- Who are you?
- What are your library and community like?
- How did you find this out?
- Who did you consult and how did you consult them?
- What did you find?

Mission Statement

- What vision of the community are you trying to support?
- What is the library's role in supporting that vision?

Services

- What are the specific services offered and why?
- Under each service, list the activities you will do, what you want to accomplish and how it relates to the mission.
- How will you measure the impact these services are having on the target population? How do you know if you are doing it right? What are your alternatives if you are not?

The time frame your plan covers will depend on how ambitious your plan is and how many activities you hope to carry out. There is no magic formula that says your plan should last one, three, or five years. Do what makes sense for your library and your community. The most important thing is to be adaptive.

Follow your plan and revisit it along the way. Make sure it is taking you where you planned and revise it as necessary. Are parts of the plan out of date? Are there new elements that you need to be add to the plan? Plans are dynamic documents that need to be changed. Mission statements tend to stay the same over time, while services and activities are likely to change. A library should regularly go through a formal planning process, which completely reevaluates the library and its future.

Advocacy

Library boards advocate for the library and plan. The board needs to advocate for the library in the community. At a time when costs and demands are rising and public agencies must compete for limited resources, it is crucial that the director, staff, and trustees work together to foster a positive public image for the library.

How to Advocate

You have a responsibility for your library's performance.

To be an advocate is simply to work to improve library experience for citizens. As a trustee, you are in a unique place to be a library advocate. The community will hold the library in higher regard because of your work.

One of the main responsibilities of the library board is to secure funding for the library. Reach out to your community to advocate for the financial support your library needs. Trustees know this kind of advocacy

the best. Trustees also have a role in other types of advocacy, like the legislative process or in working with the media.

As a trustee you must have a strong commitment to your library and its services. You need a sense of what you want your library to be in the future and you must be willing to work to move the library toward that vision.

Be willing to go out into the community on behalf of the library.

As a trustee, you are answerable to both library users and the citizens in general.

Recognize the whole community and be prepared to work with groups as well as individuals. Pursue opportunities to meet with and speak before community groups and political party organizations. Make people aware of the important role the library plays in your community.

Be knowledgeable about library services so you can answer questions and promote what the library has to offer.

A successful advocate can bring new users as well as new revenues into the library. A trustee can make an important investment in the library's future by cultivating close, cordial working relationships with key government officials. Stay current. Know who

the decision makers and influential leaders are. Cultivate relationships and make personal contact. Invite officials to library functions and thank them for their support. A trustee will be a defender of intellectual freedom, an individual's right to information.

As an advocate, you can influence decision makers by:

- Speaking to civic groups about library needs and issues
- Talking to friends about the library, its role in the community, and its needs
- Writing letters to the editor of the local newspaper
- Testifying at local and state budget hearings
- Talking and writing to state and federal legislators about the needs of the library
- Contributing to a library newsletter that is sent to decision makers.

If you choose to advocate a library-related position not agreed on by the board, be sure to make clear that you are speaking for yourself as an individual, not for the board.

Supporting the library in various ways is an ongoing commitment.

Glossary

Access Availability of the library and its services to residents of a specific service area. The ability to reach sources of information through a library and links to other sources.

Accredited Library School A college or university offering a library education program meeting standards set by the American Library Association and officially accredited by a committee of the ALA.

Acquisitions The activities related to obtaining library materials.

ADA Americans with Disabilities Act, giving civil rights protection to individuals with disabilities; it impacts libraries as service providers and employers.

Advocacy Contacting local, state, and national government officials to support funding and initiatives which improve libraries. Advocacy/lobbying is a major responsibility of library trustees

ALA American Library Association, the largest and oldest national library association in the world.

ALTAFF American Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations, a division of ALA now known as United for Libraries.

AMIGOS Amigos Library Service is a not-for-profit membership-based organization dedicated to serving libraries

Automation Use of a computer system for such tasks as circulation, cataloging, acquisitions, and interlibrary loans.

Bibliographic Access A systematic way of organizing materials so they can be identified and found readily by author, title, or subject.

Budget An overview of library funding prepared annually and approved by the appropriate governing agencies. Categories may include salaries, employee benefits, books and materials, supplies, equipment, utilities, contractual services, and capital outlay.

Call number The classification number on an item of library material used to mark the item, shelve it properly, list it in the catalog, and find it for a user.

Catalog A list or database of the materials held by a library.

Cataloging The process of describing an item in the collection and assigning it a classification (call) number.

CE Continuing education.

Censorship Action taken to prevent others from having access to information; a public objection to words, subjects, or information in books, films, or other media with the idea of depriving others from reading or viewing them.

Certification Joint voluntary program of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries and the Oklahoma Library Association to provide training for public librarians to increase skills and knowledge through continuing education. Certification is the process to recognize attainment of prescribed levels of education, training, and experience.

Children's Services Library services specifically designed to meet the needs of children up to age 11.

Circulation The act of loaning material from the library's collection for use outside the library. This activity includes either manual or electronic checkout of an item to a patron, and also its renewal, each of which is reported as a circulation transaction.

Classification System A system for arranging books and other materials according to subject or form. The system most commonly used by public libraries is the Dewey Decimal System.

Collection Development A term that covers the activities related to the building of a library collection: setting selection policy, assessing user needs, studying collection use, selecting materials, maintaining the collection, weeding, etc.

Copyright Exclusive rights given to a creator of an original work for a specified amount of time. Libraries have a special interest in fair use of copyrighted material.

Collection The total accumulation of all library holdings and electronic resources provided by a library for its clientele.

Database A collection of information stored electronically for ease of searching and retrieval via computer.

Depository Library A library which is legally designated to receive free copies of selected federal and state government publications and make them available to the public.

Dewey Decimal System A subject classification system developed by Melvil Dewey (1851–1931) that divides all knowledge into ten classes arranged in number sequence, and further divided by a decimal system.

E-books A general term used to describe a text or book which is available in an electronic form and is read using a computer or other electronic device.

E-mail Electronic mail. Messages sent through a communications network from one computer to another.

E-rate Federal program administered by the Schools and Libraries Program of the Universal Service Fund. It makes discounts available to eligible schools and libraries for telecommunication services, Internet access, and internal connections.

The program is intended to ensure that schools and libraries have access to affordable telecommunications and information services.

Fair Use The special conditions (criticism, news, teaching, or research) under which all or portions of a copyrighted work may be reproduced without infringing upon the copyright laws.

Floor Load Capacity The weight of material that a floor can safely accommodate. Of special importance in areas holding library stacks.

FLSA Fair Labor Standards Act. Federal law that establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, record keeping, and child labor standards

FOLIO Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma, the statewide organization for local Friends groups.

Friends Local groups organized to support, assist, and raise money for their libraries.

FTE Stands for “full-time equivalent” which is a standard measurement of staff size, determined by summing the total hours worked per typical week by all library employees and dividing by forty.

Fundraising The ongoing effort to secure adequate funds for good public library service is a fundamental responsibility of library boards. Tax exempt foundations, endowments, Friends groups, direct mail campaigns, and personal contact are techniques commonly used by libraries.

Government Document A publication bearing the imprint of a federal, state, local, or foreign government.

GPO The Government Printing Office is the main source of federal government publications.

ILL or Interlibrary Loan The transaction in which library material is loaned by one library to another for the use of an individual patron.

ILS or Integrated Library System A group of automated library subsystems working together and communicating within the same set or system of software to control such activities as circulation, cataloging, and acquisitions.

IMLS The Institute of Museum and Library Services is the federal agency that administers the Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA).

Institute in Public Librarianship Series of classes held throughout Oklahoma to be used toward original certification levels, with advanced classes offered for continuing education.

Intellectual Freedom The responsibility of public libraries to safeguard the free and open exchange of information and ideas by a collection representing all viewpoints, and by providing equal service to all members of the community.

ISBN International Standard Book Number. A unique identification number printed in books by international agreement.

Jobber A wholesale book dealer who supplies many titles from different publishers and sells them to libraries and retailers. Major jobbers serving public libraries include Baker & Taylor, Bro-Dart, and Ingram.

LC Library of Congress, the national library of the U.S. which serves Congress and provides many services to all types of libraries.

Library of Congress Classification System A subject classification system for books devised by the LC that divides knowledge into 21 subject areas and has a notation of letters and numbers that allows for expansion. It is used primarily in academic and special libraries.

LSTA Library Services and Technology Act. The law which provides federal funding for various library services. In Oklahoma, it is administered by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

MLS Master of Library Science, an advanced degree for librarians.

Municipal Population The total number of persons who live within the library's legal service jurisdiction, that is, the government unit(s) establishing the public library.

Multi-County Library System Authority for two or more counties to join together to provide equitable public library service to all persons within the system. Governed by Chapter A, Article 4 of Title 65 of the Oklahoma Statutes, systems are established by a vote of the people in the counties, supported by a permanent levy of 1 to 6 mills to provide more comprehensive, cost effective, and efficient public library service.

Nonresident A library user who lives outside the library's legal service jurisdiction.

OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc. OCLC is a worldwide library cooperative whose public purpose is to maintain and operate a computerized library network and to provide processes and products for the benefit of library users and libraries.

ODL Oklahoma Department of Libraries. The state library of Oklahoma that serves public libraries and state government.

OIF Office of Intellectual Freedom, a division of ALA. A resource for information on advocacy, censorship, challenges, legislation, etc.

OLA Oklahoma Library Association. The state professional association with members from public, academic, school, and special libraries.

OPAC Online public access computer. A computer- based library catalog

Performance measures Methods devised for measuring a library's performance, as determined by use of the library's resources and services. Annually each library in Oklahoma is required to collate data for its rotating performance measure.

PLA Public Library Association, a division of ALA.

PLDC **Public Library Directors Council** Organization composed of the directors of Oklahoma public libraries.

Processing Catch-all term for preparing materials to be made available to the library's users.

Public Access Computer Any computer or terminal available exclusively for public use in the library.

Range One row of several sections of single or double-faced shelving or bookcases.

Resident A person who lives within the library's legal service jurisdiction.

RFP Request for Proposal. The document issued to advertise for vendor proposals, such as automation, equipment, or software. RFPs have detailed specifications of the goods or services wanted.

Rules and Regulations for State Aid Standards set by the Oklahoma Department of Libraries for the purpose of distributing state aid to qualifying libraries. The amount is calculated on a per capita basis and the area served. Funds are appropriated by the state legislature.

Selection The process of deciding what to buy for the library. Selection is usually based on a policy adopted by the library board, the goals and objectives of the library, use of selection tools, funds available, and the skill of the library staff in responding to local needs.

Service Population The municipal population plus additional service area population (in OK, county in which the library resides).

Sequoyah Book Awards A book award sponsored by the Oklahoma Library Association, in which children and young adults vote annually on their favorite book from lists selected by members of the Sequoyah Committee.

Social Media Term used to apply to the use of web-based and mobile technologies to turn communication into interactive dialogue. Social media is a blending of technology and social interaction. Current examples are Facebook, Twitter, and Flickr.

State Aid Funding appropriated to ODL by the Oklahoma Legislature annually to be distributed to public libraries that qualify according to the Rules and Regulations for State Aid.

Summer Reading Program (SRP) Activities and programs that a public library carries out during the summer to promote reading and use of the library by children and teens. ODL provides free materials to libraries each summer.

Teen Services Library services specifically designed to meet the needs of teens from ages 12–17 years.

Trustees A term used for persons who serve on a library board.

Weeding The selection of library material from the collection to be discarded, sold, or donated because of poor physical condition, outdated content or limited popularity.

Resources

- Laws and Regulations Affecting Oklahoma Libraries
oklahoma.gov/libraries/law-legislative-reference/library-laws-and-regulations
- Oklahoma State Courts Network www.oscn.net/applications/oscn/start.asp
E-nter citation at “Quick Case (Citations Only)” in upper left corner of page.
- Oklahoma Department of Libraries oklahoma.gov/libraries
- Rules and Regulations for State Aid
oklahoma.gov/libraries/law-legislative-reference/state-aid-rules-and-regulations [PDF]
- Oklahoma Library Association www.oklibs.org
- Friends of Libraries in Oklahoma www.okfriends.net
- Oklahoma Public Libraries map
oklahoma.gov/libraries/librarians/library-systems-maps
- Open Meeting Act and Open Records Act
oklahoma.gov/libraries/law-legislative-reference/library-laws-and-regulations/statutes-and-rules--open-meetings-act
okpress.com/search/all.asp?bst=open+meeting+act
- Robert’s Rules of Order www.rulesonline.com
- American Library Association www.ala.org
- United for Libraries (formerly the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations) www.ala.org/united
- OIF: Office of Intellectual Freedom (ALA) www.ala.org/offices/oif

Resources include:

- Challenges to library materials
- Children’s Internet Protection Act (CIPA)
- Code of Ethics
- Control and censorship of the Internet
- Intellectual Freedom Manual and
- Notable quotations on the First Amendment and the freedom to read
- Privacy and confidentiality
- State library confidentiality laws
- USA Patriot Act
- Toolkits Planning for Results www.alastore.ala.org

Read more:

Reed, Sally G., and Jillian Kalonick. *The Complete Library Trustee Handbook*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2010

Appendix A—Budget Terms

Accounts Payable Payments owed for goods or services received before the close of a fiscal year.

Appropriations A general term used to denote the amount authorized in the budget for expenditure by an organization.

Budget Modification Any change to the approved budget during the fiscal year.

Cash Flow A schedule reflecting projected cash receipts and payments for payroll costs and other obligations to aid in determining seasonal and long-term borrowing needs and investment policy.

Encumbrance The setting aside of funds pending receipt of goods or services. This represents a legal obligation to pay, as evidenced by a Purchase Order or contract.

Expenditure The payment of funds appropriated in the expense budget for goods, services or purpose.

Fiscal Year (FY) Budget A budgeting period of 12 months, either January to December (current year) or July to June (midyear to next midyear). In Oklahoma, most fiscal years run from July 1 to June 30. Federal fiscal years run from October 1 through September 30.

Fringe Benefits Payments made by an organization to cover pensions, health insurance, and other employee benefits.

General Fund The fund from which the expense budget draws, and to which revenues are credited. All transactions of the organization not specifically required to be paid into a special fund or earmarked for a specific purpose belong to the General Fund.

Income vs. Expenditures In both operating and capital budgets, you will need to show income (or revenue) and expenditures. Income should be broken down by the source of the funding (for instance, municipal appropriation, county reimbursement, state aid, grant projects, gifts, and donations, fine, and fees, etc.) Expenditures are shown in categories (or lines) representing similar kinds of products or services (for instance, wages, benefits, print materials, telecommunications, etc.)

Line-item Budget A popular style of budget. The line-item budget is organized around categories or lines of expenditures and shows how much is spent on the various products and services that the library acquires.

Municipal Accounting vs. Library Accounting Since the municipality holds the funds, it keeps records of how those funds are used. This municipal accounting should be available to the library upon request. However, even though your city is performing this accounting function, it is advisable for the library to also maintain its own set of records. This will allow the board and director to know the status of finances in a timely manner and to have a check and balance assuring the municipality is not inadvertently confusing transactions and balances.

Operating vs. Capital Costs In planning for the financial needs of the library it is important to keep operating and capital activities separated for reporting purposes. Operating activities are those that recur regularly and can be anticipated from year to year. Included as operating are staff salaries, books, and other materials, heating, cooling, etc. Capital activities are those that occur irregularly and usually require special funding and/or fundraising efforts. These would include new or remodeled library buildings, major upgrades to technology, building roof repair, etc.

Requisition A request or order for something, as supplies.

Revenues The anticipated revenues in municipal budgets will usually include a detailed account of expected income and the sources from which the income will be derived.

Appendix B—Challenge Document Complaint and Concern Form

_____ Public Library

What is your complaint or concern about?

- Book Video Library Policy
 Audio Website Other

What is the title or website?

What is the author or producer?

What is your concern about this material, resource, or policy? Tell us all you can to help us understand your concerns. You may use the back of this form if more space is needed.

Name _____

Address _____

Signature _____

- I have been given the board approved policy for dealing with written complaints about materials.

Appendix C

ALA Code of Ethics

As members of the American Library Association, we recognize the importance of codifying and making known to the profession and to the general public the ethical principles that guide the work of librarians, other professionals providing information services, library trustees and library staffs.

Ethical dilemmas occur when values are in conflict. The American Library Association Code of Ethics states the values to which we are committed and embodies the ethical responsibilities of the profession in this changing information environment.

We significantly influence or control the selection, organization, preservation, and dissemination of information. In a political system grounded in an informed citizenry, we are members of a profession explicitly committed to intellectual freedom and the freedom of access to information. We have a special obligation to ensure the free flow of information and ideas to present and future generations.

The principles of this Code are expressed in broad statements to guide ethical decision making. These statements provide a framework; they cannot and do not dictate conduct to cover particular situations.

1. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
2. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
3. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
4. We respect intellectual property rights and advocate balance between the interests of information users and rights holders.
5. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness, and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
6. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
7. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representation of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
8. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.
9. We affirm the inherent dignity and rights of every person. We work to recognize and dismantle systemic and individual biases; to confront inequity and oppression; to enhance diversity and inclusion; and to advance racial and social justice in our libraries, communities, profession, and associations through awareness, advocacy, education, collaboration, services, and allocation of resources and spaces.

Adopted at the 1939 Midwinter Meeting by the ALA Council;
amended June 30, 1981; June 28, 1995; January 22, 2008; and June 29, 2021.

Appendix D

Oklahoma Confidentiality Law

Oklahoma Statutes 65 O.S., § 1–105

- A. Any library which is in whole or in part supported by public funds including but not limited to public, academic, school or special libraries, and having records indicating which of its documents or other materials, regardless of format, have been loaned to or used by an identifiable individual or group shall not disclose such records to any person except to:
1. Persons acting within the scope of their duties in the administration of the library;
 2. Persons authorized to inspect such records, in writing, by the individual or group; or
 3. By order of a court of law.
- B. The requirements of this section shall not prohibit middle and elementary school libraries from maintaining a system of records that identifies the individual or group to whom library materials have been loaned even if such system permits a determination, independent of any disclosure of such information by the library, that documents or materials have been loaned to an individual or group.

Appendix E

ALA Freedom to Read Statement

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label “controversial” views, to distribute lists of “objectionable” books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be “protected” against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee;
amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

Appendix F

ALA Freedom to View Statement

The Freedom to View, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.

To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.

To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.

To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.

To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council

Appendix G

ALA Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019. Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Appendix H

Library Policies

Rules and Regulations for State Aid Required

- Circulation or borrowing
- Library materials selection or collection development
- Internet use

For CIPA Compliance

Safety of children on the Internet

Other Policies Good to Have

- Computer use
- Wireless Internet
- Emergencies
- Exhibits or Displays
- Meeting Rooms
- Patron Behavior
- Personnel
- Donations and Gifts
- Safety of Children
- Cameras and Recording

Appendix I

Open Meeting and Open Record Acts

Oklahoma State Statute - Open Meeting Act (25 O.S., §§ 301 et seq)

The law applies to all meetings of all library boards. Any time a quorum (majority) of the board meets to discuss library business or a committee is authorized to take action on library business, you must notify the public of the meeting (at least 48 hours in advance), even if it's a committee meeting.

Boards must file a yearly schedule of regular board meetings with local officials by December 15th. This includes the time, date, and place. If there are any changes to this schedule, inform the appropriate official at least 10 days before the meeting. Announce special meetings 48 hours in advance. Announce emergency meetings with as much public notice as possible.

Agendas should clearly list what the board is going to discuss and what actions the board is going to take. It must be publicly posted at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Keep minutes to summarize what the board considered, name who was present and absent, and list the roll call votes on all actions taken.

Hold executive sessions to discuss a specific employee, the purchase of real estate, and pending legal actions. List the session on the agenda. The board must vote to enter into the session and vote to reconvene. All votes on actions must be done in open session.

Library boards should take this seriously. Violations can have bad results, like invalidating all actions taken, fines and even jail.

Open Records Act (51 O.S., §§ 24A.1 – 24A.9)

The public may request information or records like:

- Minutes of board meetings
- Names and salaries of library employees
- Library policies
- Records of income and expenses

If you're not sure about a request, call on the city attorney or the Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Appendix J

Performance Appraisal for Director

Adapt this to reflect the job description of your director and the needs of your library.

Library Director Performance Review

Name _____ Date _____

Reason for appraisal:

- End of probation Annual Final Other

Administrative Duties

Rating: Exceeds Standards (3), Meets Standards (2), Does Not Meet Standards (1)

1. _____ Act as the library board's executive officer
2. _____ Serve as the technical adviser to the board
3. _____ Carry out the policies of the library as established by the board
4. _____ Prepare an annual library budget draft for board discussion and approval
5. _____ Present or join others to present the budget to local officials
6. _____ Handle library funds and expenses per established guidelines. Keep accurate and current records showing the status of library finances
7. _____ Recruit, select, hire, supervise, evaluate, and fire, if necessary, library staff following library policies, city personnel laws and procedures, as well as state and federal law
8. _____ Working with the library board chair, prepare library board meeting agendas and reports. Notify trustees of scheduled meetings
9. _____ Fill out and submit the library's annual report to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries by the deadline

Narrative evaluation and assessment of effort in achievement of objectives.

Collection Management

Rating: Exceeds Standards (3), Meets Standards (2), Does Not Meet Standards (1)

1. _____ Select or direct the selection of materials for all media and all age groups, based on the library's collection development policy

- 2._____ Catalog and classify library materials according to accepted standards and maintain the public catalog
- 3._____ Process materials to provide appeal, protection, and control
- 4._____ Develop and keep a regular weeding schedule
- 5._____ Periodically review the collection development policy and make recommendations to the library board for revisions
- 6._____ Oversee the shelving and organization of materials
- 7._____ Prepare and send overdue notices to users with overdue or lost materials
8. _____ Keep an accurate and up-to-date database of user registrations and activities

Narrative evaluation and assessment of effort in achievement of objectives.

Service and Service Promotion

Rating: Exceeds Standards (3), Meets Standards (2), Does Not Meet Standards (1)

- 1._____ Develop and deliver a mix of services and programs to address the various needs of users.
Examples of things the library can have or do:
 - Book lists of popular topics and genre collections
 - Library tours for schools, daycares, and homeschooling groups
 - Interesting educational or cultural displays,
 - Presentations to local organizations or groups on what the library offers
 - Story times for small children and book talks for teens and adults
 - Summer reading at the library
 - Special materials and accommodations for people with special needs
 - Special service for people who can't visit the library—like curbside pickup and home delivery
- 2._____ Be friendly and efficient when helping people check out items, answering questions, or helping users find information or materials
- 3._____ Write news releases and media announcements on new or special services and events that spotlight the library
- 4._____ Guide volunteer groups, like the library friends, who want to help the library promote, fundraise, and enhance services
- 5._____ Prepare grant applications to help fund the library's mission
- 6._____ Keep records showing library programs and number of attendees at each program
- 7._____ Always be looking at the value, costs, and logistics of adding library services, new media, and new technologies to keep the library current and proactive in its service to the public
- 8._____ Evaluate library programs, services, policies, and procedures and submit recommendations for improvement to the library board

Narrative evaluation and assessment of effort in achievement of objectives.

Facilities Management

1. _____ Oversee the care and maintenance of the library building and grounds
2. _____ Oversee the work of custodial staff
3. _____ Review building needs and advise the board as it plans for expansion or development
4. _____ Assess the adequacy of existing facilities regarding the provision of automated services

Narrative evaluation and assessment of effort in achievement of objectives.

Director's objectives for the next year (mutually agreed to by board and director).

Certification

Board Chair's Signature _____ Date _____

Library Director's Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix K

Responsibilities by State Law

Activity	Director	Board	City
Organization	Serves as advisor to the board. With the chair, prepares and sends out the agenda before each meeting and assures that the Open Meeting Act is observed. Prepares the minutes for board meetings acting as board secretary.	Elects the chair, secretary, and other officers as the board sees necessary. The secretary signs and the board approves the minutes. The chair makes and appoints standing subcommittees for personnel, budget, and finance. Make ad hoc subcommittees as needed.	City council—appoints 5–9 members, who are citizens of the municipality, in staggered terms.
Meetings	Attends all library board meetings except those at which the director’s personnel action or salary are discussed. Posts a schedule and information about the regularly scheduled meetings with date, time, place, and agenda of each meeting.	Decides on time and place for meetings. Files a list of meeting times and places with city clerk and with the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.	City council liaison may attend all board meetings.
Budget	Prepares the budget with the budget and finance subcommittee and submits it to the whole board for approval.	Whole board or an appointed budget and finance subcommittee prepares budget with librarian. Whole board discusses and approves the budget and presents it to the city council for approval.	City manager—Advises librarian and subcommittee on the funds available for the next fiscal year to maintain the library. Recommends changes in the budget. City council—discusses and approves budget.
Finances	Prepares and submits bills for board approval. Signs claim vouchers. Keeps financial records.	Approves bills for payment by city council.	City council—approves library bills for payment. Receives annual financial and statistical report from the board.
Staff	Hires, evaluates, and dismisses staff following city policy and laws.	Recommends library director with approval of the municipality.	City council—Hires library director and staff as recommended by the board. City manager—makes sure library staff get same benefits as all other city employees.
Administration	Recommends policies to the board. Makes decisions on programs, services, book selection, acquisition, processing and personnel in following board policies.	Adopts policies after review and discussion. Annually review policies to determine if library is adequately serving the entire community.	City manager—keeps library director and board informed of city plans and actions affecting the library.

11 O.S., §§ 31–101 through 31–108

Appendix L

Rules and Regulations for State Aid

Definition of a Public Library

The term “municipal library” means a public library established, supported, and maintained through taxation by a city or town whose library board of trustees is appointed pursuant to municipal authority.

Oversight

A public library and its board are created by and are subject to existing statutes and ordinances. A public library board approves the policies by which the library operates. The board shall review all policies within a four-year cycle and shall report all current policies to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

Funding

A public library is mostly supported by either municipal funds or a direct library levy on a permanent basis.

Staff

To fill its obligation to provide access and service, the public library has one or more permanent paid positions.

Library Materials

A public library circulates to the community a collection of materials (like books, magazines, audios, and movies) acquired following a written selection policy and supported by a materials budget. Libraries should use a standard cataloging and classification system like Dewey Decimal or Library of Congress for bibliographic access. Libraries should participate in interlibrary loan networks, since no public library can give the best service without the having access to resources outside itself. Every library has a responsibility to share their resources.

Access

A public library is open to the public on a regular schedule in a building that is owned or maintained by a local government entity. The hours of operation are posted to inform the people of the library’s availability.

For more information about State Aid, visit the Law and Legislative Reference page on the Oklahoma Department of Libraries website—oklahoma.gov/libraries/law-legislative-reference.

Appendix M

Sample Board Agenda

Give copies of the minutes, reports, and perhaps a list of expenditures, to members before the meeting.

1. Call to order
2. Roll call, declaration of a quorum of trustees present, introduction of guests
3. To discuss and consider approval of the minutes
4. To discuss and consider approval of the financial report
5. To discuss and consider approval of the library director's report
6. Overview and approval (if allowed) of monthly expenditures
7. To hear reports from officers, boards, and committees (list these in detail)
8. To discuss and consider approval of _____
9. To discuss and consider approval of _____
10. Public comment period _____
11. To avoid open meetings violations, the board should limit itself to answering basic questions from the public and place the matter on a future meeting agenda if more discussion or deliberation is needed.

Adjournment

The Open Meeting Act requires individual votes and minutes that reflect how each person voted.

Appendix N

Sample Board Bylaws

These rules are supplementary to the provisions of Oklahoma state law as they relate to the procedures of boards of library trustees. Adapt these sample bylaws sections to your library board situations or discard unless set by state law. *(Note: text in parentheses is explanation and you should remove it from the final draft. Sections in italics are dictated by state law.)*

Article I Name

This organization is the Library Board of the _____ Library, located in _____, Oklahoma, established by the Oklahoma municipality (and/or county) of _____, according to the provisions 11 O.S., §31–101, and exercising the powers and assuming the duties granted to it under said statute.

Article II Membership

Section 1—Appointments and Terms of Office

The members of the library board shall be comprised of members, appointed by the municipal governing body, to serve a term of three years.

Section 2—Compensation

No member shall receive compensation for board duties and attendance.

Section 3—Removal

The municipal governing body may remove any member for misconduct or neglect of duty.

Section 4—Terms

Appointed members shall hold office for a term of three years from the first day of May following their appointment and their terms shall be staggered.

Section 4—Vacancies

Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments.

Article III Meetings

Section 1—Meeting Attendance

Members shall be expected to attend all meetings except as they are prevented by a valid reason.

Section 2—Meeting Schedule

The regular meetings of the library board shall be held _____ (monthly or quarterly) on the _____ (week number) in _____ (month) on _____ (day of week) at _____ (time), with an annual meeting set for the month of May.

Section 3—Special Meetings

Special meetings may be called by the chairperson, or upon the written request of members, for the transaction of business stated in the call for the meeting.

Section 4—Annual Meeting

An annual meeting date shall be designated by the board for election of officers. The annual meeting will be in May at the established time and day of regular board meetings set in Section 2 above.

Section 5—Agendas and Notices

Meeting agendas and notices shall indicate the time, date, and place of the meeting and indicate all subject matters intended for consideration at the meeting.

Section 6—Minutes

Minutes of all meetings shall, at a minimum, indicate board members present, all items of business, all motions (except those that were withdrawn), and the result of all votes taken. Current board minutes shall be posted.

Section 7—Quorum

A quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting shall consist of _____ members of the board present in person.

Section 8—Open Meetings Law Compliance

All board meetings and all committee meetings shall be held in compliance with Oklahoma's open meetings law. (25 O.S., §§ 301 to 314)

Section 9—Parliamentary Authority

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order, latest revised edition shall govern the parliamentary procedure of the meetings, in all cases in which they are not inconsistent with these bylaws and any statutes applicable to this board.

Article IV Officers

Oklahoma Statutes 11 O.S., § 31–103, requires the board only to elect a chair and a secretary “and such other officers as they deem necessary.”

Section 1—The officers shall be a chair, a vice chair, and/or a secretary, elected from among the appointed trustees at the annual meeting of the board. No member shall hold more than one office at a time. No member shall be eligible to serve more than two consecutive terms in the same office.

Section 2—A nominating committee shall be appointed by the chair three months prior to the annual meeting and shall present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

Section 3—Officers shall serve a term of one year from the annual meeting at which they are elected and until their successors are duly elected.

Section 4—The chair shall preside at meetings of the board, authorize calls for special meetings, appoint all committees, execute all documents authorized by the board, and generally perform all duties associated with the office of president.

Section 5—The vice president, in the event of the absence or disability of the chair, or of a vacancy in that office, shall assume and perform the duties and functions of the chair.

Section 6—The secretary shall keep true and accurate minutes of all meetings of the board, shall issue notice of all regular and special meetings, and shall perform such other duties as are generally associated with the office of secretary. The library director or a member of the staff may be designated by the board to perform any or all of the above duties.

Article V Committees

Section 1—Standing Committees

The following committees: _____, shall be appointed by the chair promptly after the annual meeting and shall make recommendations to the board as pertinent to board meeting agenda items. [Examples of possible standing committees are Personnel, Budget, and Policy.]

Section 2—Nominating Committee

A nominating committee shall be appointed by the chair three months prior to the annual meeting and shall present a slate of officers at the annual meeting. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at that time.

Section 3—Ad Hoc Committees

Ad hoc committees for the study of special problems shall be appointed by the chair, with the approval of the board, to serve until the final report of the work for which they were appointed has been filed. These committees may also include staff and public representatives, as well as outside experts.

Section 4—Powers

No committee shall have other than advisory powers.

Article VI Duties of the Board of Trustees

Section 1—Responsibility for the control and supervision of the _____ Public Library is vested in the board of trustees.

Section 2—The board can make advisory recommendations regarding the selection, appointment, evaluation and removal of the library director to the municipal governing body.

Section 3—The board shall fix any fees to be charged by the library.

Section 4—The board shall have such powers and authority as may be provided by ordinances of the municipality.

Section 5—With approval of the governing municipality, the board shall have the power to purchase grounds and erect thereon a suitable building for the use of the municipal library and to suitably equip the same, and to lease rooms or buildings for the use of the library.

Section 6—The board may impose fines or suitable penalties for loss of, failure to return, or damage to library materials, subject to ordinances which the municipal governing body may enact.

Section 7—The board shall cooperate with other public officials and boards and maintain vital public relations.

Section 8—The board shall make on or before the 31st of July each year an annual report to the municipal governing body stating:

1. Condition of its trust as of the 30th of June of that year
2. The various sums of money and property received from the library fund and other sources and its expenditures
3. Budget for the next fiscal year
4. Statistics on general character and number of books and periodicals including:

Article VII Library Director

The library director shall be appointed by the board of trustees and shall be responsible to the board. The library director shall be considered the executive officer of the library under the direction and review of the board, and subject to the policies established by the board. The library director shall act as technical advisor to the board. The library director shall be invited to attend all board meetings (but may be excused from closed sessions) and shall have no vote.

Article VIII Conflict of Interest

Section 1—Conflicts

A board member shall withdraw from board discussion, deliberation, and vote on any matter in which the board member, an immediate family member, or an organization with which the board member is associated has a substantial financial interest.

Article IX General

Section 1—Voting

An affirmative vote of the majority of all members of the board present at the time shall be necessary to approve any action before the board. The chair may vote upon and may move or second a proposal before the board.

Section 2—Suspension of Resolutions

Any rule or resolution of the board, whether contained in these bylaws or otherwise, may be suspended temporarily in connection with business at hand, but such suspension, to be valid, may be taken only at a meeting at which two-thirds (#) of the members of the board are present and two-thirds of those present so approve.

Section 3—Amendments

These bylaws may be amended at any regular meeting of the board by majority vote of all members of the board, provided written notice of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to all members at least ten days prior to the meeting at which such action is proposed to be taken.

Adopted by the Board of Trustees of the _____ Library
on the _____ day of _____.

Appendix O

Sample City Ordinance

Ordinance No. _____

An Ordinance Providing for Library Service to the City of _____.

Be It Ordained by the Mayor and City Council of the City of _____

Section 1

It is the desire and intent of the governing body of the city of _____ to provide free public library service to the residents of the city of _____, for the benefit of the city, the State, and the Nation.

Section 2

The _____ Public Library is hereby established.

Section 3

The _____ Public Library shall be governed by a board of at least five members and no more than 9 members appointed by the mayor with the approval of the city council. Appointments to the library board shall be made on the basis of ability, understanding of the total responsibilities and objectives of public libraries, and an active interest in the attainment of these goals. All library board members shall serve thereon without compensation.

Section 4

Said board members shall hold office as follows: Initial appointments shall be for one (1) one-year term, two (2) two-year terms, and two (2) three-year terms. Subsequent appointments shall be for three-year terms except in the case of an appointment to fill a vacancy, which appointment shall be for the remainder to the unexpired term, which is vacant. No person shall serve more than two full, successive terms. All terms of initial and succeeding appointees shall expire on June 30 of the designated year.

Section 5

Any board member may be removed by the appointing authority or municipality for misconduct, failure to attend board meetings or neglect of duty.

Section 6

Immediately after the initial appointments, annually thereafter, the board members shall meet and organize by election of one of their numbers as chairman, and by the election of such other officers as they deem necessary. They may adopt such laws, rules, and regulations for their own guidance and for the operation of the library as may be expedient and not inconsistent with this Ordinance and laws of Oklahoma.

Section 7

The board shall appoint a library director and shall recommend an annual budget to the governing body of the city. It shall set the policies of the library, accept of decline gifts, and administer the expenditure of funds received from appropriations, gifts, and grants. The library board may contract for and receive funds available for library purposes from the United States, the State of Oklahoma, any agency or instrumentalities of these entities.

Section 8

The library board shall submit an annual financial report to the Mayor and the city council *[and to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries] for each fiscal year ending June 30. The report shall include an accounting for monies received and expended and such other statistics about library use, collections and staff which may be deemed necessary to account for their trust.

Section 9

The mayor and city council shall annually appropriate to the library board from funds available to the city such moneys as deemed necessary to operate and maintain the _____ Public Library for the education and cultural enrichment of the citizens of

Section 10

All ordinances and parts of ordinances in conflict herewith are hereby repealed.

Section 11

This ordinance shall be in force and take effect from and after its passage, approval, and publication as required by law.

Passed by the council this _____ day of _____,

Approved by the Mayor this _____ day of _____,

Attest:

_____, City Clerk

_____, Mayor

System libraries are required to submit annual financial reports to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries.

Appendix P

Self-Evaluation Checklist for Trustees

General Information

Checklist

- I know when my library was established
- I know all other members of the board
- I arrive on time to library board meetings
- I have studied and use the Oklahoma Library Trustee Handbook
- I give a reasonable amount of time and thought to my job as a trustee
- I ask questions and give constructive feedback at board meetings
- I am familiar with my library's website
- I support my library director in efforts to provide good library service
- I know the library laws as they apply to my library
- I am familiar with my library's policies

Funding

Rating: Exceeds Standards (3), Meets Standards (2), Does Not Meet Standards (1)

- ___ I know about the library's budget and the budget process of the city
- ___ I know about the sources of the library's funds
- ___ I know about the Maintenance of Effort from the local government
- ___ I am knowledgeable with the Rules and Regulations for State Aid

Access and Services

Rating Scale: Frequently (3), Occasionally (2), Never (1)

- ___ I visit my library to get to know the collections, programs, and services it offers
- ___ I use the library for study, enjoyment, reading, and more
- ___ I visit other libraries to inform myself of library practices

Personnel

Checklist

- I support the library director and staff
- I attend at least one library related training each year
- I advocate with local governing officials for library staff

Materials and Resources

Rating Scale: Expert (3), Knowledgeable (2), Unfamiliar (1)

_____ I know the collection development policy

Technology

Rating Scale: Expert (3), Knowledgeable (2), Unfamiliar (1)

_____ I know the Internet and online access policy

Facilities

Checklist

- I am familiar with the library facility and grounds
- I advocate for needed repairs

Administration

Checklist

- I am familiar with the Annual Report submitted to the Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Advocacy

Checklist

- I belong to the state library organization
- I encourage friends, family, and other community members to use the library
- I contact my state representatives about legislation concerning libraries