![Alberta Library Trustees' Association logo]

ALBERTA LIBRARY

TRUSTEES' ASSOCIATION

Alberta Library Trustees' Association Handbook

9th Edition – August 2016

Acknowledgements

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Introduction

Alberta's public libraries give us local access to all the information in the world, in all formats. Always important, such access has become even more vital in today's high-speed environment. Our libraries are essential public services, critical to our quality of life and our communities' success. **The Alberta Library Trustees' Association (ALTA) has been advocating for public libraries and the trustees that govern them since 1971**. There have been challenges, but through it all, ALTA has been listening to and supporting trustees. For more information on ALTA, take a look:
http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/the-alta-board.

Perhaps even more important than linking to information is linking to the worlds of imagination and leisure that the library provides. There is great value in the stories that entertain us and bind us together.

Alberta's public libraries are governed by Boards of volunteer trustees appointed by local municipal councils. Your Board, with its intimate knowledge of your community, is in the best position to address the challenges your library faces. As a trustee, you are to be commended for agreeing to become a part of the network of individuals working to ensure that public libraries continue to contribute to the ideals of a free society: **access to knowledge**, **freedom of information**, and **the right to communicate**.

In appointing you as a library trustee, your community has expressed its trust in your skills, diligence, integrity, and ability to effectively manage the public library for this and future generations. The task demands time, energy, and competence. This Handbook from the Alberta Library Trustees' Association' supplies the tools and references you need to do the job! You can also access the Handbook as an online learning module on ALTA's website:
http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/trustee-learning.

Section I:
The Alberta Library Trustees' Association

Belief Statement

The Alberta Library Trustees' Association believes that library services are essential to the quality and standard of life of Albertans and vital to the education, social, and cultural development of the province.

Adopted 2013

Mission Statement

ALTA is the collective voice for library trustees. ALTA builds trustee capacity through education, leadership, communication, partnerships, and collaboration.

Adopted 2013

Vision Statement

Effective Library Board Trustees providing leadership for great community library services to all Albertans.

Adopted 2013

Code of Ethics

Library Boards exist to develop, promote, and monitor library services as a public trust. To this end, library trustees should be committed to the following principles:

1) The primary goal of public library trustees is to ensure that the public has access to the highest quality of library services possible.

2) Trustees should ensure that each person has access to the most complete library service possible, compatible with equal service for others. Where limitations in service are unavoidable, any inherent inequality of service should favour those residents least able to obtain alternate service.

3) Library Trustees should observe ethical standards with truth, integrity, and honour.

   a) Trustees should avoid situations where personal advantage or financial benefits may be gained at the expense of other library users.

   b) Trustees should distinguish between their personal views and those of the institution by respecting the position of the Board, even though they may disagree.

   c) Trustees should respect the confidential nature of library records within the framework which allows for the monitoring of material usage and the need for public accounting.

4) Trustees should respect the established structure of the library.

   a) Trustees should attempt to work harmoniously with the Board and ultimately accept its will.

   b) Trustees should limit their trusteeship role to policy governance and advocacy.

5) Trustees are expected to take responsibility for their personal development through continuing education opportunities and participation in provincial and national library organizations.

6) Trustees should support intellectual freedom in the selection of library material.

Adopted May 1992

ALTA acknowledges the Louisiana Trustees of Public Libraries, whose code of ethics was used as a model for this version.

Canadian Library Association Statement of Intellectual Freedom

The Alberta Library Trustees' Association endorses the Canadian Library Association (CLA) *Statement of Intellectual Freedom*, adopted in 1974 and amended in 1983 and 1985.

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's *Bill of Rights* and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity, and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making the library's public facilities and services available to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

CLA Statement on Internet Access

Adopted by the Canadian Library Association in 1997, amended in 2000. This statement is intended to be considered in tandem with both the *CLA Statement on Intellectual Freedom* (1985) and the *CLA Statement on Information and Telecommunication Access Principles* (1994). The principles enunciated in those statements apply to issues of intellectual freedom and public access to the Internet in libraries and provide guidance in this area.

In addition, CLA encourages libraries:

- To offer Internet access with the fewest possible restrictions.

- To familiarize themselves, their governing bodies, and their communities with the legal issues surrounding the provision of Internet access and to integrate such legal reference points into their access policies.

- To incorporate Internet use principles into overall policies on access to library resources, including time, place, and manner restrictions on Internet use, and user behaviour policies and to publicize these policies widely and post them prominently in library facilities and on electronic media.

- To safeguard the long-standing relationship of trust between libraries and children, their parents and guardians, in developing Internet use policies and practices, acknowledging the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians.

- To create library web pages consistent with resource priorities that point to appropriately reviewed sites both for general use and for use by children.

- To educate their publics about intellectual freedom principles and the shared responsibility of public and school libraries, parents, and guardians in facilitating access to resources in various forms of media, including the Internet. And,

- To assume active leadership in community awareness of, and dialogue on, the issues inherent in the informed use of this essential, yet non-selective and unregulated medium in libraries.

ALTA Structure, Process, and Benefits

There are more than 230 library Boards in Alberta, including seven regional library systems, all eligible for membership in ALTA. Each trustee is considered a member of ALTA by virtue of the Board's membership. These Boards operate more than 300 public libraries. Boards that do not operate library services, but act to support and facilitate public library service within their areas, are included.

ALTA serves about 2,000 trustee members, and through them represents the collective interests of all Alberta public library supporters and users. ALTA is a not-for-profit volunteer organization, governed by an elected and appointed Board. ALTA is funded by membership fees and project and grant funding from Alberta Municipal Affairs. It was incorporated on July 26, 1971, under *The Alberta Societies Act*. On January 1, 1990, ALTA became a registered charity under the *Canada Income Tax Act*, and can issue official tax receipts for donations. ALTA provides strong support for library leadership and innovation. Most of all, ALTA provides its members with the information, tools, and training to govern Alberta public libraries effectively and responsibly.

ALTA is the collective voice of all Alberta library trustees; we work to improve and strengthen the role of library Boards. Membership in ALTA entitles each trustee on your Board to:

- Participation in the Alberta Library Conference at reduced rates.

- Copies of the Trustee Voice either in print or electronically.

- Representation with the Canadian Library Trustees' Association through CLA.

- Participation in ALTA's trustee education workshops.

- Can be nominated for the Lois Hole Lifetime Achievement Award and the ALTA Awards of Excellence. Awards are recognized at the Annual General Meeting.

- Direct representation to the office of the Minister responsible for public libraries.

- Information on what is happening provincially and nationally in the library community.

> **Public library Boards who choose ALTA membership benefit through training, conferences, information, and support!**
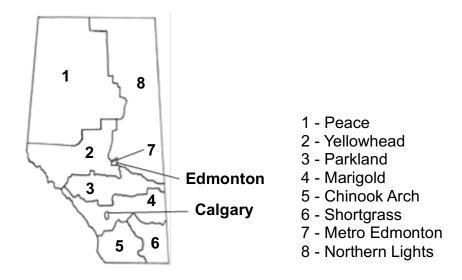
Your membership contributes to a strong provincial voice that is needed to speak out on behalf of Alberta Libraries. The more members we have, the stronger our voice!

The ALTA Board

The ALTA Board meets four or five times a year, and may also meet via conference calls. At its Annual General Meeting, held during the Alberta Library Conference each spring, the Board reports to the membership, adopts a budget, and considers resolutions. The Association President and regional Directors are elected.

The ALTA Board consists of:

- President, elected annually from the entire membership.

- Vice-President and Treasurer, elected at the first meeting after the AGM from among the Directors.

- One Director from each of the eight regions on the map below. Even and odd-numbered regions elect Directors in alternate years.

- One Director each from Edmonton and Calgary Public Library Boards, appointed annually.

1 - Peace
2 - Yellowhead
3 - Parkland
4 - Marigold
5 - Chinook Arch
6 - Shortgrass
7 - Metro Edmonton
8 - Northern Lights

Administrative support is provided to the Board by an Executive Director. ALTA's website: www.librarytrustees.ab.ca

ALTA Committees

ALTA operates through five standing committees:

- **EXECUTIVE**: President, Vice-President, Treasurer, Executive Director. Responsible for acting on behalf of the Board between meetings.

- **OPERATIONS**: Responsible for the financial affairs of the Board, personnel, bylaws and policy development.

- **ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT**: Promotes ALTA's liaison with government, other agencies, local trustees, and supporters of public libraries. Identifies political issues and develops effective lobbying and advocacy strategies.

- **TRUSTEE EDUCATION AND RESOURCES**: Oversees The Trustee Voice (ALTA's newsletter); responsible for information brochures, ALTA website, The Alberta Library Trustees' Association Handbook, as well as any other information packages prepared for the membership.

- **TRUSTEE RECOGNITION**: Oversees ALTA awards and recognizes ongoing excellence in the Library Community.

ALTA Works to Achieve Its Goals

- Development and sponsorship of workshops and seminars for library trustees across Alberta.

- Joint sponsorship, with library and system Boards, of local workshops.

- Joint sponsorship of the annual Alberta Library Conference with the Library Association of Alberta (LAA).

- Frequent communication with our membership.

- Advocacy for library issues and active participation in significant projects in the library world.

- Regular interaction with other provincial, national, and international library associations.

- Liaison with other provincial cultural groups and literary associations.

- A positive relationship with the Public Library Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs.

ALTA Awards

TWO ALTA AWARDS OF EXCELLENCE

The Alberta Library Trustees' Association Award of Excellence was created to recognize library Boards that have supported their libraries to provide ongoing exceptional service over a 5 year period. The award winner is announced at the ALTA annual general meeting at the Alberta Library Conference.

There are two Awards of Excellence:
- One award to libraries serving populations of **less than 20,000**
- One award to libraries serving populations of **over 20,000**

LOIS HOLE LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

The Lois Hole Lifetime Achievement Award recognizes Albertans who have made significant contributions to libraries and library trusteeship. Established in 2001, the Lois Hole Lifetime Achievement Award honors the passion that our lieutenant governor had for the role libraries play in our society and in gratitude for her support for libraries in Alberta.

The award recipients are recognized at the ALTA annual general meeting.

Nominations

Awards nominations are open and applications need to be submitted. Applications will be accepted until **January 31st of every year**.

To apply, please **download** and submit the **ALTA Award Nomination For:**
http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/wp-content-uploads/2015/06/Award-Nominations-Form-for-2016.pdf.

Contact ALTA

Current information and applications for ALTA membership, workshops, conferences, awards, and initiatives, and contact information for your local ALTA representative, are available on the ALTA website:
http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/contact-us/area_directors/.

Section II:
The Library Trustee

Introduction

When you agreed to be a public library trustee, you consented under Common Law to undertake several legal and moral obligations. The moral obligations simply include belief in the importance and value of libraries, desire to contribute to their growth and development, and endorsement of your library's Vision and Mission. The legal ones are more complex.

The Public Trust

A "**TRUST**" is a legal relationship which is created when one or more persons holds legal title to property, but another person or persons has the right to the enjoyment or benefit from that property. As a library trustee, whether municipal, intermunicipal, community, or system, you have been given a fiduciary duty – you have been entrusted by your community with the responsibility for your public library. You represent the interest of this and future generations in the management of the library services. The Board is a creator of policy, employer of personnel, controller of finances, and advocate of libraries.

> **20 questions not-for-profit board directors should ask about overseeing management of risk (2009)**
>
> https://www.cpacanada.ca/business-and-accounting-resources/strategy-risk-and-goverance/not-for-profit-governance/publications/20-questions-not-for-profit-board-directors-should--ask-about-overseeing-management-of-risk
>
> (Or use this shortened URL: http://goo.gl/s1pyMZ)

As a trustee, you have agreed under the common law:

- To use the same care, diligence, and skills in managing the library's affairs as you would your own.

- To become informed about the business of the Board and applicable policy and legislation, and to take advantage of learning opportunities to become a more effective trustee.

- Not to use the library's affairs to your own advantage. If you stand to profit from an action or decision of the Board, you must declare that interest, and may not participate in discussion or vote pertaining to it.

- To keep confidential any private information you learn in the course of your activity as a trustee, both during and after your term.

- To put the best interests of the public library before your own or any other when you are acting as a trustee.

- Not to agree in advance to vote a certain way or turn a decision in a particular direction.

As a trustee, you are protected from personal liability for library debts and obligations. However, if you are negligent or in breach of your duty as a trustee (fiduciary duty) or knowingly collaborate with another who has committed such a breach, you may be sued for any loss sustained by the library as a result.

PURPOSE	**PROGRESS**
CONTINUITY	**IDENTITY**

Role and Responsibilities: Boards and Trustees

BOARD ROLE

The library Board is an autonomous legal entity, deriving its authority as a corporation from the municipal bylaw which established it and *The Alberta Libraries Act*. It may or may not actually own the physical library it operates, but it does own and govern the organization it has put in place to achieve the library's goals and objectives.

BOARD RESPONSIBILITIES

The Board is responsible for:

- Establishing the purpose of the library, and seeing that it is implemented through a vision and mission, and self-governance and operational policies.

- Planning for the future and setting the rate of progress towards achievement of the library's purpose through goals and objectives – with timelines – by ensuring sufficient funds to achieve the budget, and by overseeing the budget and funding allocation.

- Providing continuity in the library through bylaws, policy, records, and reports of Board activity.

- Creating and confirming the library's identity in the community through advocacy and lobbying.

- Hiring, monitoring, and evaluating one senior staff position.

TRUSTEE RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustees are appointed to the Board by their municipal council for a term of up to three years, and may be reappointed in accordance with *The Libraries Act*.

By consenting to serve as a trustee, you are consenting to assume the following responsibilities:

- Believing and supporting the vision and mission of your library.

- Being aware of your legal responsibilities as a trustee.

- Contributing your knowledge, experience, or expertise in a major management area: finance, personnel, program, policy, or advocacy.

- Becoming aware of issues affecting your library.

- Handling Board business effectively and fairly.

- Maintaining an active library membership.

- Participating in the development of framework, governance, and operational policies.

- Helping to develop goals and objectives congruent with the library's vision and mission.

- Regularly evaluating and reviewing bylaws, policies, and goals and objectives, and amending as required.

- Ensuring adequate funds from government and other sources to carry out the goals and objectives.

- Participating in the financial management of the library.

- Developing awareness of the difference between Board and staff roles.

- Participating in lobbying all levels of government for positive action for libraries.

- Increasing your own and other trustees' knowledge of library matters through discussion, ongoing orientation, and attendance at workshops and conferences.

- Serving on at least one Board committee.

- Participating in the organization and implementation of marketing plans and activities.

- Assisting in the formation of partnerships with other community organizations.

- Complying with the *Alberta Libraries Act* and *Regulation*.

- Embracing the Alberta Library Trustees' Association *Code of Ethics* and Canadian Library Association *Statement of Intellectual Freedom*.

As a trustee, you will always be perceived as representing the library in your community. Even though you may personally disagree with a Board decision and are free to debate it during Board meetings, **the Board speaks with one voice**, and what you say in public should always endorse Board decisions.

Trustee Checklists

An easy way for Board members to understand their responsibilities more clearly and to meet them is to use checklists like the ones below. The Alberta Library Trustees' Association has many learning resources for trustees. There are learning modules available for personal learning or sharing with Boards on ALTA's website: http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/trustee-learning.The following are some tools to help with becoming an effective board member.

HOW TO BE AN EFFECTIVE BOARD MEMBER

- ❐ Arrive at meetings on time prepared to actively participate.

- ❐ Prepare reports, motions, etc., in writing if possible, and submit to the Board Secretary in sufficient time for distribution before the meeting.

- ❐ Read Board material in advance of meetings, noting comments and questions.

- ❐ Follow through on assigned activities.

- ❐ Notify the Chair in plenty of time about items for the agenda.

- ❐ Develop a working knowledge of the Board manual and applicable legislation.

- ❐ Maintain friendly, positive relationships with other Board members and staff.

- ❐ Ask questions!

- ❐ Participate in discussion and decision making, ensuring that you offer your relevant comments and suggestions prior to the Board's decisions.

- ❐ If you disagree, disagree with ideas and motions rather than individuals.

- ❐ Understand the rules of order and rules of the table chosen by the Board to facilitate meetings.

- ❐ Calendar Board and committee meetings and events, to allow time for advance preparation.

- ❐ Notify the Chair in advance if unable to attend a meeting.

- ❐ Keep your own copy of the Board Manual current, including agendas, minutes, and other materials; discard outdated materials.

- ❐ When your term is up or when you resign, pass your up-to-date Board Manual to the trustee who replaces you.

- ❐ Always speak positively of the library to the public.

MEETING CHECKLIST

A checklist like the one below helps evaluate and improve meeting effectiveness. It will also help all participants focus on what is expected of them during the meeting. Hand it out at the beginning of a meeting and collect at the end. It need not be signed.

- ❒ Was the purpose of the meeting clear?

- ❒ Was the agenda sent in advance?

- ❒ Were any required materials distributed in advance?

- ❒ Did the meeting start and end on time?

- ❒ Was the agenda followed?

- ❒ Was a course of action decided on?

- ❒ Was the purpose achieved?

- ❒ Was a schedule for action determined (assignments and deadlines)?

- ❒ Were these accepted or resisted by Board members?

- ❒ Will follow-up to this meeting be easy or difficult?

- ❒ Was a lot of meeting time spent on unnecessary items?

- ❒ Was leadership of the meeting shared when appropriate?

- ❒ How did you feel about this meeting?

Board Positions

Most Boards have a common structure. They consist of a leader (President or Chair), a supporting executive members, a financial officer, a member to look after recordkeeping, and supporting members to make decisions. The following are some basic job descriptions for the primary roles on a Board of Directors.

PRESIDENT OR CHAIR

- Provides leadership to the Board.

- Sets the tone and climate for Board activity.

- Ensures that the Board meets requirements of trusteeship.

- Determines the need for meetings, sets the time, sets the agenda, and chairs meetings according to procedure accepted by the Board.

- Calls meetings to order and adjourns them within the appointed times.

- Pursues knowledge of Board and chair responsibilities, appropriate legislation, bylaws, policies, and rules of order through ongoing development and education opportunities.

- Summarizes and brings closure to discussion, without introducing personal opinions and biases.

- Facilitates the contribution of all trustees to Board business.

- Ensures that Board plans are followed, adhering to legislation, bylaws, and policy.

- Ensures that proper records are kept and signs adopted minutes of meetings.

- Has signing authority for library accounts.

- Implements the decisions of the Board, usually assigning specific tasks or delegating to committee.

- Ensures that committee chairs are in place, and may appoint committee chairs.

VICE-CHAIR

- Assumes duties of the chair in the absence of the chair.

- May have signing authority on library accounts.

- May have on-going assigned duties, such as trustee recruitment or orientation.

SECRETARY

- Records minutes of Board meetings and provides copies to trustees at least one week prior to next meeting, together with agendas and other required materials.

- Maintains a file of original minutes and copies of reports, correspondence, etc., at the library.

- Notifies Board members of meetings.

- Handles library correspondence as directed by the Board.

- May hold signing authority for library accounts.

- Acts as chair if both chair and vice-chair are absent.

- Confirms locations for meetings.

- Brings required materials (Board manual, minutes, and reports) to meetings.

- Assists chair in developing agenda.

Note: Boards may choose to have a non-trustee recording secretary who may be staff or a volunteer; if staff, duties must be in job description and time is paid.

TREASURER

- Chairs finance committee; prepares agenda for finance committee meetings.

- Sets up and/or monitors bookkeeping/accounting procedures.

- Is familiar with current accounting practice and applicable legislation.

- Submits a financial summary and status report to Board meetings.

- Has, with two or three others, signing authority for library accounts.

- Prepares, with the senior staff person, an annual financial report.

- Ensures that the annual report required by Alberta Community

- Development is properly prepared, audited, and submitted.

- Maintains a file of potential revenue sources, including application criteria, procedures, and deadlines, and ensures that grants and special funding are correctly applied for.

- Presents the Board's budget and estimate of funds to council and other funding bodies.

- Spearheads the development of Board financial policy.

- Takes advantage of training opportunities to enhance knowledge of library financial management.

Trustee Recruitment and Orientation

RECRUITMENT

Library trustees can only be appointed by the Municipal Council. Most councils would probably welcome the Board's active assistance, especially if the Board has developed a strong partnership with the council. The Board could offer to participate in a recruitment committee, thereby ensuring that the Board's needs for individuals with the necessary interests and expertise will be met.

Advertise Board positions in whatever format is most effective for your community. Applicants should be given a job description and interviewed. The recruiter(s) should not only supply a brief summary of the Board and its operations, but should also determine the interests, background, and aspirations of the candidate with reference to the library and the Board's needs, especially if a particular position is being recruited for.

The recruitment process should inform candidates of the requirements for Board membership, the time commitment expected, skills required, kinds of work the Board does, additional expectations (such as attendance at workshops and conferences), honorarium (if any), and reimbursement of expenses.

For more information, refer to the Appendix A: Board Job Descriptions and various Board development resources in Appendix B: Further Resources.

ORIENTATION

No business would expect to hire a new employee and not supply background information about the organization, specialized training, and necessary updates. Boards, however, often appear to expect trustees to be able to govern the complexities of the public library with little or no related background or education.

Through an ongoing orientation process, the Board ensures that a new trustee has enough information to quickly become an effective and contributing member. Making orientation a regular part of Board business also helps more experienced trustees remain up-to-date on important changes, issues, and developments – an excellent beginning to trustee education!

ALTA has an orientation module available online; see http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/trustee-learning and click on "Changing Newbies to Knowbies."

Trustee orientation:

- Makes a new trustee feel welcome and needed.

- Increases efficiency and saves time.

- Decreases frustration.

- Helps every member of the Board utilize skills fully and explore interests.

- Fosters a sense of unified purpose.

- Provides continuity.

The orientation process should include:

- A meeting with the Board Chair or Vice-Chair prior to the first Board meeting.

- A tour of the library and review of the services and programs it offers.

- An explanation of library funding.

- An explanation of Board operations, including meeting schedules, committee structure and responsibilities, and trustee roles and responsibilities.

- A review of the Board Manual: Vision, Mission, bylaws, policies, budget, legislation, etc.

- Pairing with an experienced trustee for the first few meetings.

- A scheduled orientation from time to time for the entire Board.

- The "Newbies to Knowbies" workshop at http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/trustee-learning.

Basics of a Board Manual

Every trustee must have a current copy of the Board Manual, which should contain:

- The Board's Vision, Mission, Bylaws, and Goals and Objectives (Plan of Service).

- The municipal bylaw under which the library was established.

- A **brief** history of the library.

- Self-governance, operational, and advocacy policies.

- Names, contact information, and brief biographies of current Board members.

- Names and positions of staff.

- Standing committee terms of reference and members.

- Calendar of Board, committee, and other library-related meetings and events.

- List of library programs and types of resources.

- Community profile and needs assessment summary.

- Rules of order, rules of the table, and procedures governing conduct of meetings adopted by the Board.

- Budget and three previous financial reports.

- Minutes of the three most recent Board meetings.

- Annual Board report.

- *Alberta Libraries Act* and *Regulation*.

- Alberta Library Trustees' Association *Handbook*.

Assembling such a manual is a huge task, best done over an extended period. The key to keeping it current is to set aside a portion of every Board and committee meeting to review, evaluate, and update it. Ten to fifteen minutes should be enough. Doing this on a regular basis ensures you won't be faced with doing it all at once – an almost impossible job!

Trustee Education

Orientation is only the beginning of the education you need. Effective trustees look for opportunities to enhance their skills. Some ways to cultivate excellence might include:

- Developing skills in policy development by participating in trustee training opportunities, checking out sample policies from other libraries, and studying library legislation and resources.

- Learning to make effective presentations to councils, other funders, and the community.

- Soliciting policy-related recommendations from staff and patrons.

- Becoming involved in provincial, national, and international trustee organizations.

- Participating in library-related conferences, workshops, and meetings, and networking with other library folk whenever possible.

- Talking – and **listening** – to your community about your library at every opportunity.

- Transferring personal growth and skill development from other areas of your life to your work as a trustee.

You can learn to be a more effective trustee through:

- The annual Alberta Library Conference every spring.

- The Canadian Library Association Conference, usually held in June.

- Board Development Program workshops, targeted to your own Board.

- The Trustee Workshops, sponsored by ALTA, and other workshops presented by or sponsored by ALTA.

- Library Board Basics Workshops, on topics such as the *Libraries Act*, roles & responsibilities of library trustees, and more, offered by the Public Library Services Branch of Alberta Municipal Affairs.

- The online resources on many aspects of library trusteeship listed in the Trustee Resource Centre on the ALTA website.

- The Online Trustee Education Modules, a series of modules on topics critical to effective trusteeship.

- Workshops and conferences presented by regional library systems.

- Other library events, conferences, and seminars.

- Other trustees.

- Seminars, workshops, and other personal growth and adult education opportunities, as they arise.

Excellent trustees continually qualify themselves for the job as they serve. It is up to the Board to facilitate their efforts. This means including money for trustee education in the budget.

Section III:
The Library Board

The Alberta Libraries Act and *Regulation*

All public library Boards in Alberta operate as corporations under *The Alberta Libraries Act, L-11, RSA 2000*, and the accompanying *Libraries Regulation*. They have all the normal powers of a corporation, limited only by the legislation, such as *Section 3 (4)*, which states that the name of the library Board shall be "The [name of municipality] Library Board."

All Boards must, under *The Libraries Regulation*, file copies of their bylaws, plans of service, and policies with the Minister (through the Public Library Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs). In addition, they must annually file the required forms and reports. System Boards must also file information about their Board members and service points, as well as forwarding their meeting minutes and resolutions immediately after each Board meeting. Failure to comply with the act and regulation may jeopardize annual provincial grants.

Boards operating libraries in municipalities of 10,000 or more are required to employ a graduate librarian.

The Act and *Regulation* contain a great deal of information vital to the effective governance of your library. Every trustee should have copies, and read them!

Types of Library Boards

The Libraries Act defines Alberta public libraries. The parameters for each type are set out in *The Act*.

MUNICIPAL LIBRARIES

Most public libraries are in this category. Municipal library Boards are established through a bylaw passed by their municipality (city, town, village, summer village, or municipal district). They are supported primarily by municipal taxes and provincial grants, and are governed by a Municipal Library Board of not fewer than five and not more than ten trustees appointed by the municipal council. No more than two of the trustees may be members of the appointing council. They may operate a library service (most do) or may play a supportive role to other libraries within the area, as do many library Boards of municipal districts.

INTERMUNICIPAL LIBRARIES

The council of a municipality may authorize the municipality to enter into an agreement with one or two other municipalities to establish an intermunicipal library Board to provide library services to that meet the needs of those municipalities. The makeup of the intermuncipal library Board would be determined during the initial agreement development.

COMMUNITY LIBRARIES

A community library Board may be established in any area, other than a municipality, where library services are not already provided by a library system Board. Any assemblage of persons, incorporated or not, may apply to the Minister responsible for libraries to be authorized to provide library services to the public. Members of the community library Board shall be appointed in the manner and on the conditions prescribed by the Minister. A community library Board may raise funds for the support of the library.

LIBRARY SYSTEMS

The Minister responsible for libraries may, on request, establish a regional library system to provide services to libraries within a geographic region. Municipalities, improvement districts, special areas, Metis settlements, and school authorities may enter into agreements with each other to form a library system for the provision of such services. Each member appoints one trustee to the Library System Board. Systems are supported by levies from members and in some regions the libraries served, as well as provincial grants.

FEDERATIONS

Since 1998, certain municipal library Boards have had the option, under *The Act*, of forming federations with the City of Edmonton or the City of Calgary Library Boards, with the permission of the Minister. Such agreements must meet the requirements of *The Act* and *Regulation*. Each participant appoints one trustee to the federation Board. Financial support for a federation comes from its member libraries.

Board Bylaws

The Libraries Act requires Boards that operate public libraries to pass the following bylaws:

1) Terms and conditions under which:

   a) The public may be admitted to the building
   b) Library property may be used or borrowed by the public
   c) Borrowing privileges may be suspended or forfeited
   d) Schedule of fees being levied

2) The following are the terms and conditions under which fees may be levied:

   a) General conditions:
      i)   The issuance of borrowing cards
      ii) The use of non-library parts of the building
      iii) Photocopying
      iv) Information given in a printed, electronic, magnetic, or other format
      v)   Library services not normally provided by a public library

   b) Penalties to be paid for the abuse of borrowing privileges

In *The Alberta Libraries Act*, **free basic library service** is defined to be:

1) Access to library facilities
2) Use of library resources in the library
3) Borrowing library resources
4) Acquiring library resources through interlibrary loan
5) Basic information service

Bylaws require three readings to be passed. If all three are done during one meeting, the vote to have the third reading must be unanimous. Once the bylaws are passed, a copy must be forwarded to the chief administrative officer of the municipality for approval by the municipal council. Councils may disallow one or more of the Board's bylaws, but have no power to change them. All library Board bylaws and changes must be filed with the Minister.

All other areas of governance can be covered in the Board's policies, which can be passed or amended by a simple motion of the Board.

The Work of the Board

Municipal, intermuncipal, community, and library system Boards govern the management and regulation of the library services they offer. This means directing comprehensive and efficient organizational development and promotion, as well as maintaining excellence in current library service through careful policy development and well-informed decision making.

Boards accomplish their work primarily in meetings, so it is important that trustees understand how to manage meetings to maximize effectiveness. Under *The Libraries Act*, Boards are required to meet at least once every four months, and should meet as often as is necessary to accomplish the required business. Most Boards meet nine to twelve times per year and each meeting should be designed to maximize Board and staff input through effective use or available resources. Your Board goal should be to hold meetings that move briskly, stick to the desired timelines, take care of business and issues, and yield useful decisions.

Board Meeting Agendas

Setting the agenda is the responsibility of the Chair (whether Board or committee), with input from other trustees, committee members, and senior staff. Responsibility for the agenda should not be delegated to the Board Secretary or senior staff, though they may provide assistance. An agenda provides advance information, with a meeting outline and time frame. Agendas may be distributed with supporting documentation (minutes, financial reports, etc.) a week to ten days in advance of the meeting. The method of distribution may be any combination of Member pick up, mail, or email. The date of the Agenda package completion and method of distribution should be decided at the organizational meeting. The agenda package should include:

- The name of the group and kind of meeting (regular, special, committee, etc.).

- The meeting location and time: day, month, year, and hour.

- Items for information, discussion, and decision, including unfinished and new business.

- Reports (special, committees, librarian, etc.) and correspondence.

- Next meeting and adjournment.

- Optional items such as a list of participants and guests, a meeting timeline, the vision and mission of the Board, and the objective of the meeting.

Agendas generally follow a fairly standard format, which can help Board members know what to expect. It is, however, a disadvantage if important issues are always left to the latter part of the meeting when people are tired and anxious to leave.

Agendas should **facilitate** the work of the Board. For instance, after adoption of the agenda and approved minutes, items for information may lead into items for decision, and to discussion for future decision items, to be followed by regular reports and correspondence, etc. Deal first with high-priority items, to ensure focus of the Board's energy and enthusiasm, and keep things in logical sequence!

If the Board consistently finds itself unable to finish its agendas, try shorter, more frequent meetings. In addition it may be preferable to delegate some of the work of the Board to either standing committees, (that are struck to form recommendations on ongoing issues, e.g. finances) or to an ad hoc committee for new or time-sensitive issues. The Board should then require that these committees provide a recommendation for decision to the Board.

At each regular meeting, the Board should address:

- Achievement of goals and objectives.

- Issues and problems including concerns brought forward by the senior staff person.

- Long-range planning objectives.

- Policy update.

SAMPLE AGENDA I:

Altatown Municipal Library
Board Regular Meeting

Date and Time
Place

1) Approval of agenda

2) Approval of minutes of meeting of [previous meeting date]

3) Delegations

4) Business arising from the minutes

   a) _____

   b) _____, etc.

5) Reports

   a) Chair

   b) Senior Staff

   c) Committee

   d) Treasurer, etc.

6) New Business

   a) _____

   b) _____, etc.

7) Information items

8) Correspondence

9) Next meeting

10) Adjournment

SAMPLE AGENDA II:

Anothertown Municipal Library
Board Regular Meeting

Date and Time
Place

1) Approval of agenda

2) Approval of minutes of meeting of [previous meeting date]

3) Items for information

   a) _____

   b) _____, etc.

4) Items for decision (arising from # 3)

   a) _____

   b) _____, etc.

5) Items for discussion for future decision

6) Reports

   a) Chair

   b) Senior Staff

   c) Committee

   d) Treasurer, etc.

7) Correspondence

8) Next meeting

9) Adjournment

If a Board needs to discuss a confidential matter a motion must be made to go *in camera*. **Confidential matters** are legal matters, security matters, personal matters, or labour relations, as outlined in the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*. Nothing discussed while *in camera* may be repeated. No motion may be made by the Board while *in camera*, however once a motion has been made to come *out of camera* a resolution can be forwarded regarding items discussed while *in camera*.

Board Calendar

A calendar of Board and committee meetings, key events and timelines, conferences, trainings, and workshops makes it easier for trustees and Boards to plan their time. The calendar should be updated at every meeting. Some dates to include:

- Regular Board and committee meetings

- Annual election of Board executive (this is normally done at the Organizational meeting which is normally held at the first meeting following the Municipal Council's Organizational meeting during which Board members are assigned)

- Alberta Library Conference

- ALTA workshops

- Regional Library training opportunities

- Municipal council meetings

- Deadlines: Annual Report of Public Libraries, budget submission to council, and grant applications

- Special events and fund raising activities

- Other conferences

Board Records

A Board which does not keep accurate, organized records will find that its work will be lost, forgotten, duplicated, or – worst of all – need to be repeated again and again. Good records ensure continuity of governance and administration.

Necessary records include:

- Minutes of Board and committee meetings

- Bylaws, policies, and committee terms of reference (mandate statements)

- Annual budget

- Financial records

- Annual reports

- Needs assessment

- Plan of service and goals and objectives

- Library use statistics

- Correspondence

- Board member information

- System agreements

Library Board and committee minutes are public documents, and are the official record of the business of the Board. When minutes of a meeting are approved, *The Libraries Act* requires that the presiding chair sign them, and this official copy must be kept on file at the library in books kept by the Board for that purpose. Copies of system Board minutes must be sent to the Public Library Services Branch of Alberta Municipal Affairs. The signed minutes are the official version accepted in a court of law.

Minutes should be numbered to conform to the agenda. Committees should submit, if not minutes, at least written reports, as a record of their activity and actions. It's probably a good idea to keep a separate running numbered and dated record of all motions passed.

Minutes should include:

- Name of the Board or committee and kind of meeting (regular, special)

- Date, time, and place of the meeting

- Full names of presiding Chair, and those present, absent, or absent with regrets

- Guests, if any

- Minutes of previous meeting approved as circulated, amended, or corrected

- Items discussed and reported on, including main points of discussion, and decisions

- All motions, who made them, and whether they were carried, defeated, or tabled

- Time and place of next meeting, if set

- Time of adjournment

- Name and position of person recording the minutes

- Date of approval and signature of presiding Chair

Board and Staff Functions

Boards are responsible for the governance of the library service they provide, but not for the day-to-day operations. The Board sets directions, goals and objectives, bylaws, and policies, while the staff members administer library operations accordingly. (In rare instances, a Board does not have staff, and itself acts in lieu of staff, which makes it both an administrative and a governing Board.)

The Board is responsible for:

- Identifying the community's needs and developing a Plan of Service.

- Setting policy.

- Determining a budget and securing adequate funds to meet it.

- Hiring, monitoring, and evaluating the senior staff person.

- Developing long- and short-term goals, objectives, and plans.

- Monitoring and evaluating the library service provided.

- Promoting the library in the community.

The senior staff person has full responsibility for:

- Interpreting Board directions and developing programs and services to meet community needs.

- Making recommendations for policy changes based on staff and community feedback.

- Purchasing equipment and materials within the operating budget.

- Selecting and managing other personnel.

- Implementing Board plans.

- Evaluating program achievements.

Appointing the Senior Staff Person

One of the most important tasks the Board faces is choosing, monitoring, and evaluating the senior staff person. This individual will have more influence than any other over the tone and climate of library operations, and the quality of the programs and services offered.

Generally, the process includes:

- Developing a selection process that meshes the Board's needs with personnel policy, including job description, remuneration, and benefits.

- Conducting a search for suitable candidates.

- Making an offer of employment.

- Providing orientation and training.

- Establishing a plan for performance management and evaluation.

The senior staff person is responsible for hiring, training, monitoring, and evaluating all other staff, both paid and volunteer.

The Board and Senior Staff Person Relationship

The partnership between the Board and senior staff person must be based on mutual trust and respect. Channels of communication must remain open and easy in a spirit of free discussion and negotiation. The library's vision, mission, and goals and objectives must remain uppermost.

The Board Chair or designate is responsible for monitoring the work of the senior staff person, presenting the directives of the Board in a manner that is accurate and fair. The effectiveness of the partnership will influence how well the library runs, the happiness and productivity of other staff, and the Board's relations with municipal officials and funding agencies. The senior staff person must be acknowledged by the Board and the public as the professional manager of the services the library provides.

The senior staff person is not a trustee, but attends all Board meetings, and may attend committee meetings, conferences, and training events as appropriate. This is included in the job description, and is thus part of the paid responsibilities of the position.

Direct criticism of staff by Board members is never appropriate. Such feedback should come through Board or committee channels to be dealt with as part of the performance management process. Nor is it appropriate for the senior staff person to criticize the Board or its policies to the rest of the staff, to individual trustees, or to the public. Again, such feedback should go through channels established by the Board.

The line of authority goes from the Board to the senior staff position, through the Chair or designate, and from there to all other paid and volunteer staff. Feedback from library patrons and staff comes back the same way. In the event of failure of the normal channels of communication established by the Board, another avenue must be made available. This applies both to the senior staff position and to all other staff.

Cautions

Trustees are usually people with a great interest in the library they serve, and that enthusiasm can carry them beyond the role their Board has defined. The primary role of the Board is governance, though some Boards also take on an administrative function in the absence of any or sufficient staff.

Conversely, some Boards may be overwhelmed by the tasks they face, or unaware of their responsibilities. Boards should be alert to the following unsatisfactory situations:

- Board does everything and does not allow staff to do what they should.

- Board does nothing, offloading even Board work on staff.

- Board micro-manages staff.

- Board is managed and dominated by staff.

- Board is dominated by one or two trustees who take on all work and authority.

- Board abdicates all responsibility to one or two trustees.

- Municipal council dominates Board function and decisions.

- Board and municipal council are antagonistic.

Assessing Community Needs

Before the Board is able to effectively allocate available resources, a clear understanding of what the community needs and expects from the library is required. The process of finding out what the community wants is a great opportunity for the Board to let everyone know about the library, too.

The Libraries Act requires that all municipal and system library Boards conduct a needs assessment about every three to five years. This forms the basis for the library's goals and objectives, or a library system's plan of service.

Many methods are possible, such as surveys, focused discussion groups, interviews, etc. Best is an ongoing program of information gathering, with a progressively changing focus on the needs of particular sectors, such as seniors, youth or community groups. The method(s) your Board chooses will depend on available time and money, and the information needed. A great deal of information already exists: community profiles, census information, information gathered by other organizations. **Care should be taken that the process of needs assessment itself does not create an unrealistic expectation of what is possible**.

A summary of the needs assessment should be included in every copy of the Board Manual. Help with conducting a community needs assessment is available from the Public Library Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs' website at www.albertalibraries.ca.

All Things to All People?

Whether or not you feel your library programs and services are meeting community needs, regular needs assessment will help your Board truly determine community requirements, and enable your library to evolve with the community. A needs assessment helps the Board ensure that available resources are applied for maximum community benefit. Even if all needs cannot be met locally, resource sharing increases availability.

Libraries are no longer "just a collection of books." Consider:

- Books, magazines, videos, CDs, DVDs, games, toys, software – to be used in-house or loaned out.

- Reference materials and information services.

- Information in electronic format, including links to other libraries and resources.

- Access to endless resources through interlibrary loan.

- Subscription to a wide variety of databases, often through regional systems.

- Materials in languages other than English.

- Access for people with disabilities.

- Theme collections.

- Business resources.

- Internet access, including e-mail.

- Support of life-long learning for babies through seniors.

- Space for meetings and exhibits.

- Promotion of literacy.

- Lectures, seminars, workshops.

- Stimulation of the use of library materials through publicity, marketing, displays, reading lists, programs, story hours, book talks, presentations, and discussion groups.

- Partnerships with other community organizations.

Plan of Service - Developing Goals and Objectives

The Board's plan of service is the result of a strategic planning process. It starts with the needs assessment, including the political, social, economic, demographic, and technical environment. Goals and objectives should be set both for the short term (one year) and long term (three to five years).

The organization's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are examined (SWOT analysis). The weaknesses, opportunities, and threats are prioritized in light of the Board's vision and mission, available resources, and strengths. The top few (usually no more than five to seven) are developed into goals to be achieved over the next one to five years. Goals are broad statements of what will be different once the Board has accomplished what it intends to accomplish.

Each goal is broken into portions, or objectives, which are further broken into action steps. Each step addresses four specifics:

- Exactly what will happen (how results will be measured and recognized)?

- By when?

- Who is responsible?

- What resources are required (money, materials, personnel)?

The plan of service must be reviewed annually. The Board monitors the goals and their achievement on a regular basis, keeping track of recommendations for the next annual planning cycle. Goals and objectives are not inflexible; Boards can learn much from goals that are not met or need to be modified.

Goals must be specific, measurable, acceptable, realistic, and timely (SMART). The senior staff person should be included in deliberations, both about timing, and about the effects intended changes will have on the library's present operation and services.

A current plan of service with a mission statement and goals and objectives based on an assessment of community needs must be filed with the Public Library Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs, a minimum of every five years.

Developing Policy

Policies should be clear statements expressed in broad terms, with input from trustees, staff, and the community. The Board's Vision, Mission, and goals and objectives or plan of service are the basis of all Board policies. Staff develops and carries out procedures based on the policies, and the Board monitors the staff's implementation.

Help is available from the Public Library Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs, and from your regional library system, including advice and sample policies. Completed policies and policy changes must be filed with the Branch. Boards are responsible for staying abreast of changes in library legislation.

Under the *Libraries Regulation*, a Board is required to formulate policy for:

- Orientation and continuing education of trustees and staff.

- Honoraria, if any, for trustees, and reimbursement and payment of expenses for trustees, other volunteers, and staff.

- Finance, expense criteria, and signing officers.

- Job descriptions, qualifications, performance management, and evaluation for staff, volunteers, and trustees.

- Library materials normally lent.

- Selection, acquisition, purchase, and disposition of library materials, including gifts and donations.

- Resource sharing, including participation in provincial networks and conditions applying to materials from other sources such as interlibrary loan and electronic databases.

- Provision of library resources to persons unable to use conventional print.

- Provision of resources in languages other than English.

- Library promotion and publicity, including cooperation with other organizations.

- Confidentiality of user records.

- Hours of service.

- Public use of Board-managed non-library portions of the building.

Governance Functions

Library Boards develop policies in four function areas:

1. **Framework governance** clarifies the library's purpose and identifies who it exists to serve and why. It includes:

   - Values and beliefs

   - Vision and mission

   - Strategic directions, goals and objectives, plan of service

2. **Board self-governance** sets out how the Board goes about its business. It defines, in broad terms, the roles, responsibilities, and functions of the Board, trustees, committees, and staff, and includes:

   - Policy format and process (Policy on policy making)

   - Bylaws

   - Type of Board and Board structure

   - Rules of order and the "rules of the table" unique to this Board

   - Record keeping methodology

   - Job descriptions for trustees and Board positions

   - Terms of reference for committees (mandate statements)

   - Trustee orientation, training, and evaluation

   - Chair's role

   - Trustee code of conduct (e.g. ALTA Code of Ethics)

   - Development and maintenance of a comprehensive Board Manual

3. **Operational governance** deals with specific areas of operation in a broad manner. It ensures uniform and consistent practice, prevents "spur-of-the- moment" decisions, and provides continuity. It is not specific procedures of day-to-day operations.

Program

- Needs assessment cycle to ensure program relevance

- Program planning cycle, basis for the operational procedures developed by staff

- Strategy to achieve mission and goals

- Allocation of resources

- Monitoring and evaluation of results

Personnel

- Relationship with and required skills, authority, role, responsibilities, and functions of the senior staff person

- Hiring, evaluation, and firing of senior staff position

- Conditions of employment, compensation, and benefits for senior staff position and all other staff

- Policy for volunteer staff

- Staff job descriptions

- Safety

- Partnership process with municipal council to recruit trustees

- Adherence to Alberta Employment Standards and other applicable legislation

Finance

- Budget development and review, and financial reporting

- Ensuring sufficient funds to meet the budget

- Monitoring resource allocation, including replacement and capital needs

- Fundraising

- Contracts, leases, insurance

- Reimbursement for expenses (trustees, staff, and volunteers)

4. **Advocacy governance** aims to create positive interrelationships between the library and Board and the community, government, and other organizations.

- Community awareness and support of the library

- Responsiveness to the community

- Representing the library to all other organizations, business, and government

- Forging partnerships to enhance library service

- Addressing issues

- Monitoring legislation and interacting with elected officials

Securing Funds

The Board, together with the senior staff person, is responsible for ensuring sufficient funds to meet the budget, and for allocating them wisely. One of the major issues facing Boards is the question of tax-based funding versus other forms of revenue, such as fundraising and private donations. Once funding policy is developed, the Board must consider:

- Justification of the need to fund long-range goals and annual objectives.

- Changes and improvements recommended by the senior staff person.

- A level of remuneration that will attract and keep people with the necessary skills.

- Priorities of the municipal council(s), who will accept or reject the library's request for funds at the annual budget presentation.

- The moral and legal obligations surrounding public funds.

- The annual grant application to the Strategic Information and Libraries

- Branch, including the budget and audited financial statement.

- Administration of trust funds and/or donations in accordance with the wishes of the donors, to the maximum benefit of the library and the community.

- Agreements and contracts with agencies or individuals who provide services, equipment, or materials to the library.

- Alternative sources of funding.

The majority of public library funding (about three quarters) comes from municipalities. The remainder comes from the provincial government and other funding sources, such as lotteries, the Secretary of State, the Canada Council, private foundations, corporate sponsors, other community agencies, fundraising activities, and individuals.

In an ideal world, the clear benefits of library services would ensure ample tax- based funding. Until that happens and libraries are able to offer free library services to every citizen, securing adequate funds will remain a large part of the work of the Board. See the Funding Resources section in Appendix B.

Proposal Checklist

Most funding applications will require you to prepare a proposal. This checklist, combined with the funder's criteria, should ensure that you do not miss anything.

CHECKLIST FOR SUCCESSFUL FUNDING PROPOSALS

☐ Did you find out about the funder's reasons for offering this funding, availability of funding, and funding criteria before you began the proposal? Did you ask for a copy of their guidelines?

☐ Does the funder require specific forms or format to be used, or specific documents to be included? Have you done so?

☐ Did you target the proposal specifically to the funder, instead of using a shotgun approach, sending out form proposals to every possible funder in your sights?

☐ Is your proposal written in plain English?

☐ Did you make the assumption that the funder knows nothing about your organization, and provide the required information clearly and succinctly?

☐ Were you careful not to include unnecessary, and/or unorganized information?

☐ Have you made clear how the project fits in with your organization's goals and objectives?

☐ Is your enthusiasm about your organization and the project apparent?

☐ Have you stated the need for the project and outlined how this funding will make a difference, in a short, sweet summary near the beginning of the proposal?

☐ Have you been strictly accurate in your facts and honest in your intent?

☐ Did you comply with all deadlines?

☐ Has the issue of sustainability been addressed? Have you outlined your plans for ongoing support for the project, if this is applicable?

☐ Did you include contact information, in case the funder has questions or requires clarification?

☐ Did you follow up to make sure your request was received?

☐ Are you aware of the funder's reporting requirements, and have you made arrangements to comply with them?

☐ Do you know what the funder requires, should your project change in nature, scope, or timing? Will you have to return funds, or ask permission to reassign?

☐ If your request was turned down (and organizations get at least 10 times the number of applications they can afford to fund), did you call to find out why, so you can do better next time?

The Political Process

Library trustees and the political process are inseparable. We represent the interests of patrons and supporters at the same time as we represent the library to the community. Competition for municipal, provincial, and lottery funding is always fierce, so trustees must make sure our voices are heard. Because we serve a public trust, we must be as accountable as any other publicly funded organization, both in how we govern the library and in how we most effectively benefit the community.

The Board must present a unified front, establishing a broad base for community need, with emphasis on how many people gain from current and expanded services. Design your plans well, ensuring they are compatible with political goals. A sense of realism and a healthy sense of humour are valuable tools. Timing is crucial.

The first step is identifying the existing power structure, whether at the municipal, provincial, or federal level, and working **through** it, rather than against it. Instead of demanding political cooperation when you want something, remain in regular, year-round contact with your elected officials. Political activity has the most impact when it is accompanied by the support of many citizens over a long period of time. This means letter writing campaigns and personal contact.

Most importantly, acknowledge support and show appreciation to those who have helped the library. Say "thank you." Don't write off those who did not support you – there is always a next time!

The Library Association of Alberta has an excellent resource, "Advocacy: Talk about libraries and influence the political process," available at:
http://www.laa.ca/Advocacy%20Kit%202013%20update.pdf.

Section IV:
Library Partnerships

Libraries, Community, and the Public Library Services Branch

The Public Library Services Branch is part of Alberta Municipal Affairs. Its hard-working consultants are a wonderful resource for Boards, trustees, library personnel, municipal councils, and other agencies, organizations, and individuals concerned with library service development. About 15% of public library funding comes through this Branch.

Since every Board must file its bylaws, policies, needs assessments, and goals and objectives or plan of service with the Branch, there are many samples available. The Branch promotes high quality library and information services for Albertans through:

- ❐ Support and monitoring of library legislation.

- ❐ Assistance with the development of public libraries and library systems.

- ❐ Specialized consultation for planning, provision of services, organizational development, leadership training, resource sharing initiatives, telecommunication networks, and management and program evaluation.

- ❐ Consultation to councils, recreation Boards, booksellers, publishers, and any educational and community agencies interested in library service.

- ❐ Encouragement of co-operation among all types of libraries.

- ❐ Financial assistance, including annual operating grants to public library Boards and library systems, one time establishment grants to library systems, and funding for initiatives that research, develop, and promote public library service.

- ❐ Coordinating the provincial Public Library Network.

- ❐ Interlibrary Loan Agreement.

- ❐ Orientation of new trustees (with ALTA), and regional and provincial workshops in conjunction with library systems, agencies, and institutions.

- ❐ Liaison with post-secondary institutions such as SAIT, MacEwan University, and the University of Alberta that offer training programs for library personnel.

CONTACTS:

The PLSB can be contacted via their webpage. Please visit:
http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/plsb_contact_us for updated contact information.

The Alberta Library

The Alberta Library (TAL) began with Libraries: ASAP - *A **S**trategic **A**ction **P**lan for Information Services*, meant to ensure that Alberta's citizens have access to a wide variety of current and valuable information. It now offers "The Alberta Library Card" – one card that can be used at any participating library in the province. A voluntary reciprocal borrowing program, it offers Albertans direct access to the collections of member libraries.

Patrons must be members in good standing at their home library. All member libraries abide by the TAL policies for access to resources at other member libraries. TAL membership includes not only most Alberta public libraries, but also many college, university, technical, and special libraries.

For updated information about TAL, their services and upcoming activities, please visit their webpage at: http://www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca/.

Regional Library Systems

Chinook Arch Regional Library System	http://www.chinookarch.ab.ca/
Marigold Library System	http://www.marigold.ab.ca/
Northern Lights Library System	http://www.nlls.ab.ca/
Parkland Regional Library System	http://www.prl.ab.ca/
Peace Library System	http://www.peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca/
Shortgrass Library System	http://www.shortgrass.ca/
Yellowhead Regional Library System	http://www.yrl.ab.ca/

Municipal councils within seven geographic regions of Alberta have the option of becoming part of a regional library system (1 to 6 and 8 on map on page 10). These are cooperative ventures intended to optimize library services in the member municipalities, long recognized as a most effective way to provide comprehensive library services outside large cities. (Region 7, Metro Edmonton, has the option of forming a federation.)

Each municipality appoints a member to the system Board, which is responsible for the governance of the overall system operation. Local Boards retain autonomy over the governance of their own libraries, and provide the vital link between the system and individual communities. The majority of the funding for systems comes from the member municipalities and libraries, and the province.

Benefits of regional systems are primarily benefits of scale. System can provide central ordering with volume discounts and centralized processing, freeing staff time and resources at member libraries. Resource sharing becomes easier with a system's infrastructure, and all members benefit from the technical and consultative options and expertise of a larger entity. Systems may offer such benefits as local conferences, rotating theme collections, a system newsletter, shared programming, specialized training, and local networking opportunities.

The Regional Automation Consortium (TRAC) is an automation consortium of Marigold, Yellowhead Regional, Northern Lights, and Peace library systems, tied to TAL. It allows patrons to do online searches in those four systems, renew library materials, and put items on hold using their TRAC-TAL card.

ME Libraries is a relatively new service that began as a pilot project to allow borrowing of library materials between libraries in the Metro-Edmonton area. It quickly grew to include borrowing from over 300 member libraries across the province of Alberta. Patrons, over the age of 18, can sign up for free for ME Libraries to gain borrowing privileges from all ME member libraries.

The patron uses ME Libraries in conjunction with their home library card and can check out physical materials from any member library. Items can only be picked up in person from a participating library, but can be returned at any other participating library. This service is particularly useful for travelers and students. It's different from the TAL card in that the ME libraries allows their home library card to work in all participating libraries, while the TAL card allows a person to register for a separate card at each participating library.

Good Community Relations

A library in tune with its community is able to meet changing needs for effective library programming and services. The most important partnerships to build:

- A healthy internal Board relationship that builds on individual strengths.

- Strong, mutually respectful, collaborative relationship with municipal council.

- An open, supportive, trusting relationship with library staff.

- A warm, approachable presence to library users and supporters.

- A friendly, supportive relationship with the regional library system, other system members, and wider networks, such as TRAC and TAL.

- An interactive, positive relationship with the Public Library Services

- Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs.

- Mutually beneficial partnerships with other community agencies through shared planning and sponsorship of services and programs.

- Regular, friendly, consistent interaction with elected officials and government staff.

- A positive, productive relationship with funders and potential funders.

Developing and maintaining a comprehensive community relations program is a major responsibility of library Boards, trustees, and staff, and does not happen by accident. An effective program positions the library as an essential service and links the library to the partners and support that will enable it to be a highly visible, highly useful part of the community.

Appendix A:
Board Job Description

Job descriptions for Board trustees and Board positions are an important component of Board self-governance. Use them in recruitment, orientation, and evaluation. The following representative samples will help you develop your own.

SAMPLE TRUSTEE JOB DESCRIPTION

Organization

Altatown Public Library Board

Position

Board Trustee

Area of Authority

The Altatown Library Board is the legal authority for the Altatown Public Library, and is collectively responsible for governing all aspects of library operation. A Board member is a volunteer on the library's Board of trustees, representing the interests of the community, and is entrusted by the community to manage the library effectively. Each trustee is responsible for actively participating in discussion, policy development, and decision making.

Requirements for Membership

- Belief in the importance of libraries and commitment to the vision and mission

- Willingness to serve, and to sit on one or more Board committees. (Time commitment varies with number of meetings, conferences, etc., each month.)

- Skill or knowledge in one or more areas of Board governance: policy, program, personnel, finance, or advocacy

Tasks

- Become aware of and fully informed on library matters, issues, and legislation

- Contribute to discussion and decision making and foster positive relations among Board members, committees, staff, and community

- Accept responsibility for library affairs and governance

- Develop, approve, monitor, review, and evaluate policy, bylaws, budget, and plan of service

- Develop skills through attendance at workshops, conferences, trainings, etc.

- Monitor Board and trustee effectiveness

Appointment

Appointment to the Board is made by the Municipal Council for a term of three years and may be renewed, as set out in *The Alberta Libraries Act*.

Evaluation

Each trustee shall annually participate in an evaluation of his or her performance of Board duties and responsibilities, using a checklist and standards agreed upon by the Board. Self-evaluation after each meeting is encouraged.

Termination

Termination of trusteeship (as specified in *The Libraries Act*) may occur at the conclusion of the appointed term; after three consecutive missed Board meetings not pre-authorized by the Board; by a decision of Council; or by resignation.

Review

This policy was approved on [date], and will be reviewed annually.

Appendix B:
Further Resources

Trustee and Board Development

First and foremost, check out the resources and link available on the ALTA website: http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca.

The list below is by no means complete. If your library does not have copies of the resources listed, check out TAL (The Alberta Library) online (http://www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca/).

The Alberta Libraries Act, L-11, RSA 2000

http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/Acts/L11.pdf

The Libraries Regulation, 1998

http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266.cfm?page=1998_141.cfm&leg_type=Regs&display=html

Public Library Service, Municipalities & Communities, Alberta Municipal Affairs

http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/public_library_service.cfm

Board Development Program, Programs & Services, Community, Alberta Culture and Tourism Free Board development workshops targeted to the specific needs of your Board.

http://culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/

Information Bulletins, The Board Development Program publishes information bulletins on a variety of board-related issues relevant to nonprofit board members and senior staff looking for information about improving skills in governance; includes writing grant proposals, budgeting, financials etc. Take a look http://culturetourism.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/resources/info-bulletins-english/

Board Development Workbooks

Produced by the Board Development Program and the Muttart Foundation. Titles include:

- Developing Job Descriptions
- Drafting and Revising Bylaws
- Board Building: Recruiting and Developing Effective Board Members
- Hiring and Performance Appraisal of the Executive Director
- Financial Responsibilities

http://culture.alberta.ca/community/programs-and-services/board-development/resources/workbooks/

Advocacy: Talk About Libraries and Influence the Political Process

Produced by the Library Association of Alberta (LAA). Information to help your Board connect with political candidates. http://www.laa.ca/Advocacy%20Kit%202013%20update.pdf

ALTA Advocacy Presentation

Developed by Diane Osberg, 2013. http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/trustee-learning

ALTA Trustee Workshops

Workshops are presented at the regional library conferences and at the Alberta Library Conference.

ALTA Trustee Resource Centre (ATRC)

Links to online resources providing information on many aspects of library trusteeship. http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/links

ALTA Online Trustee Education Modules

Learning modules on topics critical to effective trusteeship. http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/trustee-learning

Trustee Orientation, video and workbook

By Iris English and Patricia McNamee, Alberta Library Trustees' Association, 2000. ISBN: 0968733417. Every Alberta public library received a copy when these materials were published in 2000.

Marketing and Funds Development: A Kit for Alberta Public Libraries

By Darryl Goede, Alberta Public Libraries Marketing Implementation Team, 1993.

Newbies to Knowbies

Workshop developed by Laura Ross-Giroux, 2014. http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca/trustee-learning

Giving voice to a 'quiet' majority: Final report to the Alberta Public Libraries Marketing Task Force

By Calder Bateman Communications, 1991.

Learning Resources, Alberta Corporate Human Resources

Career development, leadership, management, and public speaking videos (as well as a multitude of other resources), available free of charge to Alberta public service employees at:

http://www.pao.gov.ab.ca/?file=toolkit/learning/learning-resources

The Effective Trustee Handbook

By Sue Dutton and the Canadian Library Association, 1987.

Free Management Library

A complete online library for non-profits and for-profits, to be freely printed and used.
http://managementhelp.org/

Recruiting Volunteers: The Grizzly Creek Solution: A How-to Workshop for Recruiters of Volunteers

Video produced by the Boy Scouts of Canada, 1988.

Handbook for the Canadian Library Trustee: On Being a Library Trustee

By the Canadian Library Trustees Association, 1995.

Learning Resource Guides, Volunteer Alberta's Resource Centre

In particular, see the "Board Membership and Roles" and "Program Evaluation" sections.
http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/?s=Learning+resource

Friends for Small Libraries

By Margaret Law, published by the Canadian Library Association, 1991. ISBN: 0888022646.

A Handbook for Cultural Trustees: A Guide to the Role, Responsibilities and Functions of Boards of Trustees of Cultural Organizations in Canada

By Marion Paquet with Rory Ralston and Donna Cardinal. University of Waterloo Press. 1991. ISBN: 0888980795.

Virginia Public Library Trustee Handbook, 2005 Edition

http://www.lva.virginia.gov/lib-edu/ldnd/trustee/

Library Security and Safety Handbook: Prevention, Policies, and Procedures

By Bruce A. Shuman. American Library Association, 1999. ISBN: 0838907148. Full text available on Google Books: http://books.google.ca/books/about/Library_Security_and_Safety_Handbook.html?id=1N0iXPx5uqQC

Dealing with Difficult People in the Library

By Mark R. Willis. American Library Association, 1999. ISBN: 0838907601. Full text available on Google Books: http://books.google.ca/books/about/ Dealing_with_Difficult_People_in_the_Lib.html?id=Z1X9xE6_kBwC

The Library Trustee: A Practical Guidebook. Fifth Edition.

Edited by Virginia Young. American Library Association, 1995. ISBN: 0838906591.

The Trustee of a Small Public Library. Second Edition.

Edited by Virginia Young. American Library Association, 1992. ISBN: 083895748X.

Funding Resources

Alberta Foundation for the Arts

Under Alberta Culture and Tourism, lottery revenues are distributed to individual artists and arts organizations in the visual, performing, and literary arts, and cultural industries. Libraries fall under Community Support Organizations.

http://www.affta.ab.ca/Home

Canadian Fund Raising Directory

Formerly the Canada Grants Service. This is a directory of Canadian Grants, subsidies, prizes, and awards, available from government & private sectors. The most recent edition may be available at your library, or you may be able to access an online subscription.

http://www.icecaps.ca/CanadaGrantsFoundations.aspx

Imagine Canada

Formerly the Canadian Centre for Philanthropy. Contains articles and links of interest to fundraisers.

http://www.imaginecanada.ca/

Community Initiative Grants

Provincial grant funding for operations, programs, and facilities.

http://culture.alberta.ca/community/community-grants/community-initiatives-program/

Community Facility Enhancement Program under Alberta Culture and Tourism. Provides lottery-based financial assistance for the expansion and upgrading of Alberta's extensive network of community use facilities.

http://culture.alberta.ca/cfep/

Canadian Heritage Funding and Assistance Programs

http://www.pch.gc.ca/eng/1268917737337/1268917925906

Important Websites for Boards

Alberta Municipal Affairs

http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/

Alberta Municipal Affairs: Public Library Services

http://www.albertalibraries.ca

Alberta Employment Standards

http://work.alberta.ca/employment-standards.html

Alberta Government Library

http://www.servicealberta.gov.ab.ca/alberta-government-library.cfm

Alberta Labour Relations Board

http://www.alrb.gov.ab.ca/

The Alberta Library: Find a Library

http://www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca/services/find-library

Alberta Occupational Health and Safety

http://work.alberta.ca/occupational-health-safety.html

Canada Revenue Agency: Charities

http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/chrts-gvng/chrts/menu-eng.html

Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIPP)

http://servicealberta.ca/foip/

Government of Alberta

http://alberta.ca/

Library and Archives Canada

http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/

Alberta's Regional Library Systems (directory)

http://www.municipalaffairs.alberta.ca/library_systems.cfm

Volunteer Alberta

http://volunteeralberta.ab.ca/

Texas State Library and Archives Commission

https://www.tsl.texas.gov/

The Alberta Library (TAL)

http://www.thealbertalibrary.ab.ca/

Workers' Compensation Board

http://www.wcb.ab.ca/

Library Associations

Alberta Library Trustees' Association (ALTA)

http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca

Atlantic Provinces Library Association: Advocacy Interest Group

http://www.apla.ca/?q=node/219

British Columbia Library Trustees Association (BCLTA)

http://www.bclta.ca/

Library Association of Alberta (LAA)

http://www.laa.ca/

Library Boards Association of Nova Scotia (LBANS)

http://www.standupforlibraries.ca/

Manitoba Library Trustees' Association (MLTA)

http://www.mlta.ca/

Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA)

http://www.accessola.com/olba/

Appendix C:
Acronyms

AACL	Alberta Association of College Librarians
AADM&C	Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties
AALT	Alberta Association of Library Technicians
ALA	American Library Association
AFA	Alberta Foundation for the Arts
ALC	Alberta Library Conference
ALTA	Alberta Library Trustees' Association
APLAC	Alberta Public Library Administrators' Council
ARPA	Alberta Recreation and Parks Association
ATA	Alberta Teachers Association
AUMA	Alberta Urban Municipalities Association
BCLA	British Columbia Library Association
BCLTA	British Columbia Library Trustees Association
BDP	Board Development Program, Alberta Culture and Tourism
CACUL	Canadian Association of College and University Libraries
CALUPL	Council of Administrators of Large Urban Public Libraries
CAP	Community Access Program
CARL	Canadian Association of Research Libraries
CARLS	Chinook Arch Regional Library System
CLA	Canadian Library Association
CLTA	Canadian Library Trustees Association
COPPUL	Council of Prairie and Pacific University Libraries
CPL	Calgary Public Library
CPLSA	Creative Public Library Service Award
EPL	Edmonton Public Library
FLA	Foothills Library Association
FOIPP	Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy
GELA	Greater Edmonton Library Association
GPPL	Grande Prairie Public Library
IFLA	International Federation of Library Associations
JPL	Jasper Park Lodge
LAA	Library Association of Alberta
LAC	Library and Archives Canada

LOC	Library Operations Certificate
LRC	Learning Resources Council
MLIS	Masters of Library and Information Studies (designation for professional librarians)
MLS	Marigold Library System
MRC	Mount Royal College
MU	MacEwan University
NAIT	Northern Alberta Institute of Technology
NEOS	Networking Edmonton's Online System
NLLS	Northern Lights Library System
NRC	National Research Council
OLA	Ontario Library Association
OLTA	Ontario Library Trustees Association
PLS	Peace Library System
PLSB	Public Library Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs
PNLA	Pacific Northwest Library Association
PRL	Parkland Regional Library
SAIT	Southern Alberta Institute of Technology
SALA	Strategic Alliance for Library Advocacy
SLA	Saskatchewan Library Association
SLIS	School of Library & Information Studies (U of A)
SLS	Shortgrass Library System
SLTA	Saskatchewan Library Trustees Association
TAL	The Alberta Library
TRAC	The Regional Automation Consortium
U of A	University of Alberta
U of C	University of Calgary
U of L	University of Lethbridge
UBC	University of British Columbia
UVIC	University of Victoria
YABS	Young Alberta Book Society
YRL	Yellowhead Regional Library

Notes