

# ***Trustee Trouble: The Misadventures of a New Library Board Member***

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Produced by the Wyoming State Library

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## **Follow-up Questions for Board Discussion**

### **Membership: Taking it to the Streets (9:02 minutes)**

1. Can you name 3 reasons why legislators, parents and residents should support the library?
2. Other than American Libraries and Public Libraries, what do you and your board read regularly to keep informed about library issues?
3. What resources would you recommend to a new trustee to learn more about their job?
4. How do you stay aware of city, county and state news and issues to see how they relate to the library?

### **Orientation: Hail to the Chief (6:35 minutes)**

1. Does your library have a formal, written orientation process?
2. How could your board make things easier for new trustees?
3. Has every board member been through a structured orientation process?
4. How often does the board review policies on how it relates to the library director and employees?

### **Meetings: Land of Confusion (9:50 minutes)**

1. Why is it important to read materials prior to the board meetings?
2. Since running the meeting is the chair's job, why do all board members need to know the Rules of Order?
3. Why should the board chair be the spokesperson for the library?
4. Why should the board speak with one voice on all issues?
5. How can the board best handle differing opinions among board members?

### **Board/Director Relationship: Everybody Wants to Rule the World (8:52 minutes)**

1. What policies is the board responsible for enforcing?
2. What policies is the library director responsible for enforcing?
3. What are the current goals set by the board for the library director?
4. How current are the library's policies? Are they in written form and readily available for library employees to read?

### **Finances: Working Hard for the Money (9:14 minutes)**

1. How involved should the board be in developing the budget?
2. Once the budget is approved, does the board need to sign all the checks? Or is there a more efficient way to handle day-to-day expenses?
3. Why should the board chair present the budget to the commissioners?

### **Policies: Daydream Believer (9 minutes)**

1. How often should policies be reviewed?
2. Why does the library need policies on board conduct?
3. What is the present policy for dealing with a board member that acts contrary to the best interests or policy of the board?
4. Name 2 resources for developing policy for your library?

### **Planning: One Bad Apple (11:41 minutes)**

1. Why is it important to know the vision and plans of other community groups when thinking about the library's strategic plan?
2. Why might it be a good idea to have separate technology, facilities, employee and marketing strategic plans?
3. Does your library have a strategic plan? What are its goals and how often does the board evaluate its results?

### **Advocacy: Tears of a Clown (8:38 minutes)**

1. Why should the director not be the only advocate for the library?
2. If you don't like asking for money, what other ways can you advocate for the library?
3. What are the 3 key messages about your library that you can use when advocating?

### **Friends/Foundation Relationship: Taking it to the Limit (8:26 minutes)**

1. What do you know about your library foundation and friends of the library group?
2. Do you know the difference between the 2 groups?
3. Does the library board have a good communications and planning relationship with these groups?
4. What are the benefits of separating these groups from the library board?

### **Self Assessment: Don't Worry, Be Happy (10:14 minutes)**

1. Rate your library board (Good, Fair, Poor) using these assessment questions:
  - a. Does the library board have a policy and practice for orienting new board members to the role of trustee?
  - b. Do all of the board members regularly attend all of the monthly meetings and come to special meetings when called?
  - c. Has the library board adopted a strategic plan that it follows and regularly evaluates and does the board update the plan as conditions change? Does the board get input from the director and key staff as well as Foundation and Friends of the Library officers concerning the plan?
  - d. Are the board members familiar with all of the library's policies, their implications and impacts? And does the board make sure that it and the director actually follow these policies?
  - e. Does the board regularly establish goals and assignments for the director and then conduct evaluations on the results?
  - f. Does the board practice the one board,one voice philosophy on controversial issues?
2. How does the board determine if it is focusing on what needs to be done?
3. How can individual board members determine if they are regularly making effective contributions to the board?
4. What resources are available to assist the board in their self-assessment?

### **Questions transcribed by:**

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