

# Wyoming Library Trustees Training Cohort 2021

## Session C – Effective Boards

John Chrastka, EveryLibrary Institute  
March 9, 2021



# About this Series

## *Webinar Learning Series - Six Modules and several Coaching Clusters*

Library boards need to be equipped with relevant, actionable, and accurate information, tools, and resources in order to make informed decisions about the financial and policy future of their libraries.

January: Session A – Relationships

February: Session B – Policy and Fiduciary

**March: Session C – Effective Boards**

April, May and June on marketing and outreach



# Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to evaluate their current intra-board relationships and roles, and their relationships to the director and staff (Session A);

Participants will learn about Wyoming statutes and practices concerning library funding and financing, the law and regulations relevant to governance, and ways to navigate intergovernmental relationships (Session B);

**Participants will understand best practices for library boards including agenda development, committee work, and communications; Participants will be able to evaluate policies, understand trends, support ongoing board recruitment, and support a more effective board (Session C).**



# Format / Timeline

Six pre-recorded on-demand workshop sessions starting on the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

Live “coaching clusters” will be available on the morning of the 3rd Tuesday, the afternoon of the 3rd Thursday, and the evening of the 4th Wednesday of each month.

*Session C coaching calls: Please join on either Tues, March 16 at 10am MT; or Thurs, March 18 at 3pm MT; or March, Feb 24 at 7pm MT.*

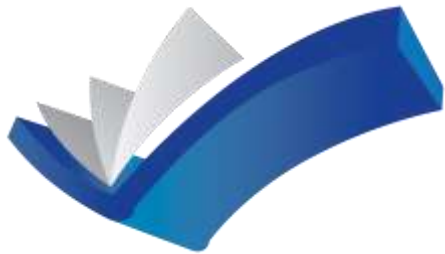
Email [john.chrastka@everylibrary.org](mailto:john.chrastka@everylibrary.org) to join a group call.





## EveryLibrary | 501(c)4 Political Action Committee

- Sponsorships, Government Relations and CSR Funding
- Spend money on “issues” and direct lobbying



## EveryLibrary Institute - 501(c)3 Research and Policy Think Tank

- Grants, Philanthropy, Federal and State Programs, Charitable Funding
- Spend on education and outreach

# About Your Presenter - John Chrastka

John Chrastka - A long-time library trustee, supporter and advocate, John Chrastka is executive director of the EveryLibrary Institute and EveryLibrary. He is a former president of the Board of Trustees for the Berwyn (IL) Public Library (2006 – 2015) and is a former president of the Reaching Across Illinois Libraries System (RAILS), a multi-type library system, and was a board member of the Metropolitan Library System which preceded RAILS. Prior to his work on EveryLibrary, he was a partner in AssociaDirect, a consultancy focused on supporting associations in governance activities, and was Director for Membership Development at the American Library Association (ALA).



# Today's Format - Session C – Effective Boards

Three Units (with breaks in between)

- What Kind of Board Are We?
- Effective Agendas and Board Tables
- Tips for More Effective Boards

“At its most basic, the only role of a board member is to establish a quorum. We believe that we should set the bar a little higher....”



# Policy and Fiduciary Relationships Within Library

<i>Responsibility</i>	<i>Board</i>	<i>Director</i>
<b>General</b>	Governance	Administration
<i>Policy</i>	Adopts	Suggests/Implements
<b>Meetings</b>	Discussion and Decisions	Resource and Expertise
<i>Budget/Finance</i>	Adopts and Monitors	Prepares, Administers, Monitors
<i>Staff</i>	Hires/Fires Director	Interviews, Hires, Evaluates, Promotes, Trains
<i>Operations</i>	Adopts Policies	Implements/Recommends
<b>Community</b>	Communicates/Collaborates	Communicates/Collaborates





What Kind of Board Are We?



# What Kind of Board Are You Today?

1. Governance Board – directs activities; accountability systems in place.
2. Policy Board – focused on the policies that guide decisions rather than governing directly.
3. Advisory Board – supports a strong director; roots its activities in their outlook and experience.
4. Working Board – small-staff supplement; project-driven, activity-oriented.
5. Planning Board – focused on future goals; strategic, financials, facilities, elections, managed change.
6. Intervention Board – acting in the interests of the appointing authority.

# Governance Board

- Sets strategic and financial direction.
- Actively invested in its own responsibilities.
- Manages the director as their one employee.
- Delegates their authority and responsibility across committees.
- Focuses on oversight and results, not operations.
- Has accountability measures in place for staff and board activity.

# Policy Board

- Numerous committees, task forces.
- Develops policies which guide operational decisions.
- Often has an executive committee for more immediate decision-making.
- Long-term decisions on how to organize activities and operations.
- Focused on strategic leadership but not operationally aware.
- Director is expected to carry out all policies. Policies = plans.

# Advisory Board

- Director tends to set the agenda.
- Board activity informs and educates but does not decide.
- Board delegates strategy, decision-making, and accountability to the director.
- Board generally does not vote down recommendations.
- Very few meetings outside of the board time.
- Low-level of committee work.

# Working Board

- Committees and board work focused on transactional needs.
- Longer meetings and more detailed discussions.
- Input and output focused.
- Project management takes the place of governance or strategy.
- Director and staff are project collaborators.
- Lots of meetings outside the board time.

# Planning Board

- Focused on the role of the library in relation to the community.
- Facilities, Financial, Strategic Plans, Elections
- Committees and task forces enable activities.
- Goal and benchmark focused.
- Accountability is equated to the image of the library or impact of the project.

# Intervening Board

- Often appointed from outside of library world.
- Tends to act in the interest of the appointing authority.
- Tends to intervene in issues that are of concern to the appointing authority.
- Accountability is transactional.
- May exclude the director from discussions or decision-making process.
- Manages communications and relationships.
- Generally, few committees.



# Role for Your Board is in State Law

The Board is responsible for Money, People, and Buildings:

- “Control, use and disposition of the county library fund,” budgeting and expending it “for the maintenance, operation and promotion of the county library and county library system in order to carry out the informational, educational, cultural and recreational role of the county library.” (18-7-103)
- “Receive and be responsible for real estate, money or other property to aid the establishment, maintenance or operation of the county library system.” (18-7-104)
- “Appoint a competent librarian who with the approval of the board of directors shall appoint a library staff. The duties and compensation of the staff shall be determined by the board.” (18-7-104)
- “Prescribe rules and regulations for the establishment, organization, operation and use of the county library and library system.” (18-7-105)

# Whichever Kind of Board You Are...

There are common responsibilities of the board regardless of the disposition, nature, and compoment of your board:

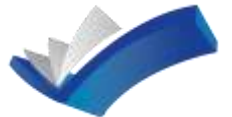
- Fiduciary responsibility
- Buildings and property
- Director and HR (limited)
- Policy matrix
  
- In state statute, the role of the library is “informational, educational, cultural and recreational”.

# \*Governance Board

- Sets strategic and financial direction.
- Actively invested in its own responsibilities.
- Manages the director as their one employee.
- Delegates their authority and responsibility across committees.
- Focuses on oversight and results, not operations.
- Has accountability measures in place for staff and board activity.

(Break... then)

# Effective Agendas and Board Tables



# Traditional Board Agendas

Enumerates the regular procedures for the board:

- Call to order
- Opening ceremonies
- Minutes and announcements
- Treasurer's report
- Director's report
- Committee reports
- Items of old business
- Items of new business
- Executive sessions
- Next meeting date and location

# Agenda Development

- What type of board you are tends to determine the nature and depth of your agenda.
- Parliamentary Procedures – Roberts Rules or another guide as part of your bylaws?
- WY Extension Office manual for County Commissions:  
<https://wyoextension.org/parkcounty/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Parliamentary-Procedure-guidelines.pdf>

# At the Board Table

- “Making the will of the people the law of the land”
- Consensus vs. Unanimity Board
- Discussion vs. Votes Board
- Taking Minutes vs. Taking Dictation

# Tips for Streamlining Board Activities

1. Committee Report vs. Committee Motion (on Recommendations)
2. Committee of the Whole (COW)
3. Consent Agenda
4. Motions that Matter
5. Informational Items
  
6. The “Inverted Agenda”
7. “No-Surprise” Executive Session
  
8. Public Comment Procedures
9. Disruption SOP



# 1. Committee Reports vs. Motions

- Committees exist to help the board fulfill its role and function.
- Committees act to learn, inquire, discuss, and deliberate matters of concern.
- Committees can report to the board without making a recommendation for action.
- When the committee recommends an action in its report that recommendation is a Motion (no second needed, it's self-seconded) to be discussed and voted.

# 1. Committees – Standing or Ad Hoc

- Standing Committee vs. Ad Hoc Committee vs. “Community” Committee
  - Every standing board committee should have a functional focus.
  - Ad Hoc board committees should have a sunset date.
  - Committees with community members must have a clear policy about who votes.
- Every committee charge should be evaluated regularly (biennial).
- Policy needs: About non-board members? About remote activity?

## 2. Committee of the Whole (COW)

- Allows the board to meet as a full group without it being a board meeting.
- Chair for the COW is often the chair of the board. Meets outside the regular board meeting (unlike an executive session).
- COW are scheduled and noticed the same as any other committee.
- COW can make a report without making a recommendation for action.
- A recommendation from the COW has the same status and process as any other committee motion.
- COWs are often used for informational sessions and discussions on topics that are not subject to an executive session.

# 3. Consent Agenda

WY Extension Guide for County Commissions calls a Consent Agenda:

“The consent agenda is usually put near the start of the meeting. It is actually part of the regular agenda and can be made up of any number of items, but any item placed on the consent agenda **should be so uncontroversial** that it can be reasonably expected that it will be adopted with no debate or separate vote. The Chair calls up the consent agenda by saying “the consent agenda is before you” and then asks if anyone wants to remove anything. To do so, a member does not need to be recognized; s/he just calls out the item number. The Chair responds, “Item number x is removed.” When no more items are removed, the Chair says: “Without objection, the remaining items on the consent agenda will be adopted.” Remember: no debate or separate vote is allowed on any item unless it is removed. If no one objects, all items are adopted. Removed items are either taken up right after the adoption of the consent agenda or are placed later on the agenda under the heading where they would have otherwise appeared. The approval of the minutes, routine matters, or motions that have been discussed at previous meetings are good candidates for a consent agenda.”

<https://wyoextension.org/parkcounty/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Parliamentary-Procedure-guidelines.pdf>

# 4. Motions to Help Manage the Agenda

- Call the Question
  - Can be used to streamline or end discussion and move ahead with a vote.
- Table the Item
  - A delaying action on the item. Item needs to be “brought back” by a subsequent motion.
- Defer (Postpone) the Item
  - Sets a specific time when the item of business is returned to the floor for action (i.e. ‘Old Business’).
- Postpone Indefinitely
  - The purpose of this motion is to prevent a vote on the question and to suppress or kill the item.

# 5. Informational Items on the Agenda

- Flag agenda items with the agenda-intent
  - Informational Item – No vote
  - Discussion – No vote or a vote to refer to appropriate committee
  - Motion – Vote or Defer
- Important question: “Is there a motion here?”

## 6. The “Inverted Agenda”

- Place high-level and important items at the top of the agenda prior to reports.
- Focuses energy and attention on the topics that matter.
- Don't bury the lede: What story do you want to tell about this library this year?
- Use a Consent Agenda to facilitate many business items.

# 7. Executive (Closed) Sessions – 1

There are a number of exceptions for executive sessions that are closed to the public, outlined in 16-4-405. These include:

- Meeting with attorneys or officers of the law, on matters posing a threat to the security of public or private property, or a threat to the public's right of access;
- On personnel matters;
- On litigation or proposed litigation to which the library is or may be a party;
- On matters of national security;
- To consider the selection of a site or the purchase of real estate when the publicity regarding the consideration would cause a likelihood of an increase in price;
- To consider acceptance of gifts, donations and bequests that the donor has requested in writing be kept confidential;
- To consider or receive any information classified as confidential by law.

[https://library.wyo.gov/assets/ldo/boards/Board\\_HandbookWY\\_2018.pdf](https://library.wyo.gov/assets/ldo/boards/Board_HandbookWY_2018.pdf)



## 7. Executive (Closed) Sessions – 2

“No action may be taken in executive session. Board Members should not take a “straw poll” vote or make any kind of agreement on how to vote before emerging from executive session. The executive session must be noted in the regular meeting minutes. If no action is taken on the matters covered in the executive session, that should be stated in the Board minutes. Minutes must be kept of the executive session itself, but they are not public information. These should be filed separately from the regular meeting minutes. Action taken at a meeting not in conformity with Wyoming’s public meeting laws is null and void.”

[https://library.wyo.gov/assets/ldo/boards/Board\\_HandbookWY\\_2018.pdf](https://library.wyo.gov/assets/ldo/boards/Board_HandbookWY_2018.pdf)

# 8. Public Meeting Requirements

“As a public agency, your duty is to conduct the business of the library in public. Wyoming Statute Title 16, Chapter 4 (401-408) lays out the requirements. Among them:

- The public must be notified of your meetings. It is good practice to notify local media of the times and dates for your meetings and ask if they would like notice, to comply with 16-4- 404(a);
- All meetings must be open to the public, other than executive sessions;
- Any Board actions must be taken in a public meeting;
- Members of the public do not have to identify themselves to attend. Members of the public may be asked for their name and affiliation if they ask to be recognized (16- 4-403(b)) and may be removed if they are willfully disrupting the meeting (16-4-406).“

[https://library.wyo.gov/assets/ldo/boards/Board\\_HandbookWY\\_2018.pdf](https://library.wyo.gov/assets/ldo/boards/Board_HandbookWY_2018.pdf)

# 9. Disruptions – Policy and Procedure

## **WY State Statute 16-4-406. Disruption of public meetings.**

“If any public meeting is willfully disrupted by a person or group of persons so as to render the orderly conduct of the meeting unfeasible, and order cannot be restored by the removal of the person or persons who are willfully interrupting the meeting, the governing body of an agency may order the removal of the person or group from the meeting room and continue in session or may recess the meeting and reconvene at another location. Only matters appearing on the agenda may be acted upon in a meeting recessed to another location. A governing body of an agency shall establish procedures for readmitting an individual or individuals not responsible for disturbing the conduct of a meeting. Duly accredited members of the press or other news media except those who participated in a disturbance shall be allowed to attend any meeting permitted by this section.”

# In the End, the Agenda Belongs to Your Board

Questions to ask before the agenda would be:

- Reports?
- Actions?
- Leftovers?
- Calendar?
- Narrative?
- Surprises?

<https://wyoextension.org/parkcounty/wp-content/uploads/2015/12/Parliamentary-Procedure-guidelines.pdf>

(Break... then)  
Other Tips for Effectiveness



# Calendar

- Published schedule of regular board meetings.
- Published schedule for standing committee meetings.
- Includes “actionable moments” (reminders) for key topics like budget, year-end close, annual reviews, trainings and CE.
- Should include work plans or themes for each month / quarter.
- What story does the library tell this year and how does the topics / conversations at the table help advance that image or narrative?

# External Relations

- Board and director at County Commission meetings.
- Delegates from the library to other boards, commissions, and work-groups.
- Foundation board and Friends board (when separate).
- CE and training from outside groups and professional organizations.
- Community liaison roles.

# Evaluation (Self or 360)

- The board is a continuing body and must provide for its own organization.
- The board must review and consider its own work on an annual basis and when new members are appointed.
- The board should work with its appointing authority to understand their priorities and its own work in relation to those priorities.
- How is the board aligned to fulfill its responsibilities under the law and for the community?



# The Next Board

- Recruitment or review of new board members for the County Commission.
- Orientation and CE for board members.

In state statute, the role of the library is “informational, educational, cultural and recreational”. Legal Basis for Wyoming Library Boards: Library Law - <https://library.wyo.gov/services/ldo/library-laws/>

- From the Wyoming State Library

Trustees Handbook: <https://library.wyo.gov/services/ldo/boards/>

Directors' Handbook: <https://library.wyo.gov/services/ldo/directors/>

# Wrap-up



# Approach for Next Three Sessions

Second Half is on “Marketing and Outreach to Build Support” with Patrick “PC” Sweeney

April 13, May 11, and June 8



# Next Sessions – April, May, June

Hand-off to Patrick “PC” Sweeney for Marketing and Outreach Modules

“Patrick has worked with a broad range of organizations and campaigns to help them achieve their political goals. He is co-author of “Winning Elections and Influencing Politicians for Library Funding” as well as “Before the Ballot; Building Support for Library Funding.” He was recently recognized for his work with a “40 Under 40” award by the American Association of Political Consultants. He is a lecturer at the San Jose University Information School where he teaches courses on politics. He is active across social media as @PCSweeney.”



# March Coaching Calls - Session C

Please schedule yourself for ONE of the Session C coaching calls during March:

On either Tuesday, March 16 at 12 noon MT

or Thursday, March 18 at 3pm MT

or Wednesday, March 24 at 7pm MT

To schedule: Email [john.chrastka@everylibrary.org](mailto:john.chrastka@everylibrary.org) with your preferred and second-choice times. He will send you an invitation to confirm. Participation is capped at 15 people per session to allow for interactions, Q&A and sharing. Bring your thoughts, questions, comments and concerns.

John is available to meet with your library board for more one-on-one support and consultations. Please visit his calendar at <https://calendly.com/john-chrastka-everylibrary> to arrange a confidential discussion.



# Wyoming Library Trustees Training Cohort 2021

**Session C – Effective Boards**

John Chrastka, EveryLibrary Institute

March 9, 2021

