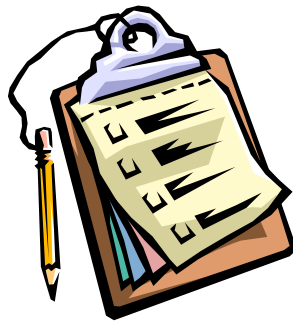


Hiring a Library Director



STEPS FOR LIBRARY BOARD MEMBERS

Prepared for the
Tennessee Regional Library System

by

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PRELUDE

The selection and hiring of a competent library director can be the most important single act undertaken by the board of trustees.

Hiring the director is a task which the board should not take lightly, because it will have long-lasting and far-reaching consequences. Since the library board is responsible for any actions of the library director, it is important for the board to select carefully.

It is the library board's responsibility to hire a good library director and to delegate sufficient authority to that director. The board is also responsible for evaluating, and perhaps dismissing, the library director. The board should, however, delegate to the library director the hiring, training, supervising, and evaluating of all other library staff members.

By keeping the hiring process legal, the library board will avoid lawsuits from the unsuccessful applicants. By careful planning, including a good job description and a careful interview process, the board should be able to hire just the "right person."

PITFALLS TO AVOID

When done correctly, the search for a new director can invigorate and energize a library. When needed, this can be an opportunity for rapid change. During the hiring process the library board has an opportunity to take a fresh look at services and to reflect on the library's future direction. The process can be arduous and full of pitfalls that should be avoided. This list of "do nots" should be discussed and considered.

- ✓ **Hiring to the weaknesses or strengths of the former director** - Evaluate each candidate on their own merit. Each person has strengths and weaknesses, and finding a comfortable balance of skills and attitudes is essential.
- ✓ **Rushing to resolution** - Recognizing the importance of having a director in place, a board may hastily make a hiring decision and not reflect on the qualities and vision they need in a new director.
- ✓ **Taking the easy way out** - Reviewing applicants for a library directorship is a lot of work and takes time. Boards should not take the easy way out and promote an internal candidate without going through the complete search process. Internal candidates should be evaluated as thoroughly as external candidates.
- ✓ **Assuming that all assistant directors are qualified to be directors** - There is a vast difference between being an assistant director under a competent library director and being the library director.

Evaluate each candidate for the range and depth of experience but also consider personality, work ethic, and commitment.

- ✓ **Being penny-wise and pound foolish** - This is not the time to be frugal. Taking time, possibly using a consultant, and offering a good compensation package will help attract the best candidates available.
- ✓ **Assuming all candidates are 100% candid** - Sometimes candidates inflate their abilities and achievements. A thorough reference and background check should be conducted. Attention should be paid to both what is said and not said during reference checks.
- ✓ **Putting too much emphasis on technical abilities** - A library director should be more than a good librarian. Great library directors are visionary leaders that communicate well with the board, staff, and community leaders.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN A NEW DIRECTOR

A library director is the chief administrative officer of the library. The director is responsible both for day-to-day management of the organization and for assisting the library board with “big picture” issues like planning and policy-making.

In developing the job description and assessing candidates, consider the following:

- experience working with library boards and governing bodies;
- knowledge of budget preparation, policy development, administration, and employee supervision;
- library experience in the following areas: public service, technical services, public relations, and automation experience;
- demonstrated leadership ability and dependability.

WHAT A LIBRARY DIRECTOR DOES

Many library board members say their policy-making role becomes clearer once they understand exactly the role and responsibilities of their library director. The person hired as library director represents the library board as the administrator of the library.

A Brief Overview:

PLANNING: Although the board makes long-range plans (for two to ten years), the director is responsible for making short-term plans to fulfill the current year's budget and objectives. The director should be given the authority and responsibility to plan precisely how plans should happen.

ORGANIZING: A library director must organize an internal structure for delivery of library services. Board members may want a say in what kinds of staff positions are necessary. But the final decision should be given to the director to create the kinds of positions and internal structure.

STAFFING: The library director is in charge of hiring, firing, evaluating, and disciplining all staff members. Board members need to step back and let the director supervise the staff.

DIRECTING AND LEADING: The library director motivates staff. The director should inspire, give direction, communicate, and lead the staff. Board members direct and lead *only through* the director.

CONTROLLING: The library director monitors and controls the internal operational activities of your library. For instance, the board approves the annual budget. But the director makes the day-to-day decisions about how the budgeted monies are spent.

PUBLIC RELATIONS: The library director is responsible for representing the library to the community, especially through attendance at county commission and city council meetings as well as participation in civic and social groups.

BASIC QUALITIES & SKILLS OF A LIBRARY DIRECTOR

Regardless of the library's size, there are five basic characteristics which should be evident in a good library director:

- ☑ **Common sense** - This characteristic is often overlooked and yet is absolutely essential to good leadership. Common sense plays a critical part in policy development and implementation. It determines whether a person is rigid or flexible in library operations and can successfully manage the day-to-day running of the library.
- ☑ **Decision-making ability** - The person should be self-confident enough to make tough, informed decisions independently and on the spot.
- ☑ **People skills** - Communication skills, fairness, friendliness, empathy, sense of humor and, most significantly, being customer focused are all essential.
- ☑ **Vision** - A good director has the ability to scan the environment in the library profession and the world at large to see how change and innovation might improve library service in the community and to spot opportunities to move the library toward with a commitment to excellence.
- ☑ **Integrity** - The individual must demonstrate a commitment to ethical behavior and to the core values of the library profession.

In addition to the above listed characteristics, a good director will have the following skills:

- ☑ **Financial management** skills to develop, implement, and stay within a budget.
- ☑ **Human resources** skills that show the ability to hire, fire, and manage people effectively.
- ☑ **Organizational skills** and the ability to multi-task.

THE STEPS

- 1. Begin with a hard look at the current status of the library.** This is an opportunity to move the library forward and possibly make significant changes in the way the library operates. The board should be prepared to spend a good amount of time evaluating their situation. Address some fundamental questions, such as:
 - What is or what should be the role of our library in our community today?
 - Have library needs changed in our community?
 - How has our library kept pace with community changes?
 - Is the board satisfied with the library and the direction it has taken under the previous director, or is it time for a new approach?
 - Are there area libraries that offer different models of service to emulate?
 - What special strengths or qualifications should a new library director possess to be successful in the community? For example, is experience with unions, construction projects, or special political acumen needed?
 - Has there been a succession plan in place that offers assurance of internal applicant's qualifications?
 - What do we really want or need in our next director?
 - What is the reason for the job opening?
 - Are we losing someone upward-bound or to retirement?
 - Was the previous director dissatisfied? If so, Why?
 - Conduct an exit interview with the current director.
 - If the director is leaving in good standing, listen carefully to their recommendations for the future and use it as a learning experience before moving forward.
 - Sample discussion topics might be:
 - How was the board/director relationship? How could it be improved?
 - What did the director like most/least about the job?
 - What issues should the board be addressing in the near future?
 - Is there anything unique about the staff to share with a successor?
 - Are there inside candidates who should be considered? What are their strengths/weaknesses?
 - Is there any parting advice to offer before leaving?
 - What does our community want?
 - Should the board consider a national search or are there strong candidates in state to consider?
 - Should a library consultant be hired to conduct the search?
 - Review salary and benefits.
 - Make sure they are competitive with region, state, and national conditions.
- 2. Develop or obtain an up-to-date description of the community.** Along with geographic and demographic information, this should include facts about the economy, government, education, recreation, and cultural activities. It should make note of any important trends or changes underway.

3. Prepare or obtain an **up-to-date description of the public library program in the community** and its relationship to other library programs in the area. This should include a history of the institution, its board composition, its articles of incorporation and bylaws, together with facts on staffing, collection, programs, and budget.
4. The next step in hiring is to **write or revise the director's job description**. On pages 19-22, there is a sample job description which could be used as a guide. That description should be edited to reflect local conditions. The complete job description should be sent to applicants with the application packet. [See Step #10 on page 9]

Be sure to include:

- Supervision and Direction
- Position Requirements: Education, Experience, Physical
 - Minimum qualifications and experience
 - Desirable qualification and experience
- Position Summary
- Specific Responsibilities
- Essential Functions and Knowledge
- Salary and benefits
- Length of probation
- Evaluation process after employment
- Statement of Professional Ethics

The job description should include any "preferred" characteristics, such as specific job experience or other work-related qualifications. A library board may hire a person who does not meet all of the "preferred" qualifications but should **not** hire a person with less than the stated "minimum requirements."

For both minimum requirements and preferred qualifications, do not list anything which is not job related. Also, do not list requirements or qualifications which might be considered discriminatory, unless they are directly related to the job. For example, the requirement that the applicant be in "excellent health" may be interpreted as discrimination against the handicapped. It is quite likely that a handicapped person who is not in "excellent health" could perform the library director's job quite satisfactorily. On the other hand, it is not unreasonable or "unfair discrimination" to require a bookmobile driver to have a valid driver's license, even though this would exclude blind applicants and others with health problems which prohibit them from driving. Never include any qualifications based on religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, height, weight, or marital status. See the "Illegal Questions" box in Step #19 on page 12 below.

5. **Form a search committee of board members.** It would be good to add a representative from the staff and/or Friends group to the committee, *ex officio*. The committee should agree on procedures, budget, and a timeline, and submit them in writing to the full board. Make plans to keep full documentation on every step of the process for the board's protection.

6. **Write a job announcement based on the job description** created in Step #4. For advertising the position, an abbreviated form of the job description should be written to include:
- Position title and name of library.
 - Brief position summary, including to whom the director reports.
 - Brief description of education and qualifications desired.
 - Special skills/characteristics desired.
 - Any special community information.
 - Starting salary or range and benefits.
 - Date of position availability.
 - Information for obtaining application packets.
 - Deadline for applications.
 - An equal opportunity employer statement.
7. Determine **methods of recruitment**. The position announcement should be distributed to:
- Local newspaper(s). [FEE]
 - Graduate library schools in the region. [FREE]
 - State and national job lines and web sites:
 - Tennessee Library Association web site. [FREE]
<http://www.tnla.org/jobbankdisplaylistings.cfm>
 - libjobs is a national web site. [FREE]
<http://www.libjobs.com/cgi-bin/newweb/seeker.pl>
 - National library journal publications:
 - American Library Association's *American Libraries* [FEE see page 28] has a JobLIST web site which posts job listings daily
<http://joblist.ala.org/index.cfm>
 - Library Hotline*, c/o Howard Katz. [FEE see page 29] is a weekly newsletter published each Monday; there is also a web site
hkatz@reedbusiness.com
8. **Make provision for the costs of interviews and moving**. What expenses will the board reimburse for those coming for an interview? What costs of relocation will the board pay for the successful candidate? Inform all candidates invited for an interview of the board's policy on these expenses.
9. **Take a good look at your present staff**. Once the board knows what they want in a director and are ready for interviews, one of the present staff might be a terrific candidate. However, don't select such a person just because they're on the scene. The board is looking for the best person for the job, who may or may not be on the staff. If the assistant librarian or another staff member is expecting to be offered the job, explore possible reactions if the local person is not hired.

10. **Develop an application packet.** On pages 15-18, there is a sample application form which should be adapted to fit local conditions. This form should be sent to applicants along with a copy of the full job description and the Statement of Professional Ethics on page 23 [See also Step #4]. Make sure to include the supplemental questions #1-5 on page 17 and the checklist in question #18 on page 18.

11. **Promptly acknowledge receipt of all applications.** Notify applicants by mail when their applications have arrived.

12. **Create or adopt a brief form to use when checking references.** Always telephone to TALK to a reference. People tend to say more about an individual than they will put in writing for fear of reprisal. Have someone who is astute at reading *and* listening between the lines do the calling.

Do not neglect this critical task. Some groups check references before any interviews are granted. Others wait until a preliminary decision on a candidate is reached. Do not limit checking references to names given by the candidate. Search out others, including employees the candidate has supervised as well as the candidate's past and present supervisors.

Obtain any requisite permission from applicants to conduct reference checks. Be aware of discrimination laws when probing for information and be sure all information is kept confidential, sharing information with the committee and/or consultant only.

Some considerations include:

- Ask about quality and volume of work, specific areas of competence, management style, relationships with the board and staff, and the candidate's ability to function in stressful situations
 - Capture words and feelings with notes during the conversations (but do not distribute these to others)
 - Listen to what is said as well as what is not said
 - Consider the currency of the information
 - Double-check any overly negative responses
-
13. **Develop a standardized evaluation sheet** which can be used during interviews. By using the same sheet, the interviewing committee will be evaluating the same characteristics.

14. **Determine the questions to be asked of the candidates.** All candidates should be asked the same list of questions. On pages 24 through 27, there are two sample lists of questions which the committee could adapt to reflect local concerns. Additional questions may be asked during the interview based on the answers the candidate gives to the basic questions.

Appropriate areas for questioning are:

- Interest in position.
- Experience.
- Education.
- Knowledge, skills, abilities.
- Personal achievements.
- Expectations of the applicant; expectations of the board.
- Personal goals.
- Questions candidate has for the interview committee.

15. **Read the resumes and answers to application questions very thoroughly and carefully.**

A resume is a good way to receive preliminary information about prospective employees, though the information may paint a “bigger-than-life” picture of the person. Richard W. Meyer in *How to Read an Applicant Resume* (Meyer, 1987) gives a good outline on reading a resume:

Read the Resume

Presentation

- Quality of presentation: Neat, error-free appearance
- Writing skill: Articulate and straightforward
- Organization: Logical order, starting with name and address
- Pertinence: Information relevant to the position

Experience

- Cumulations: New assignments built on prior learning experiences
- Progress: Growth resulting from progressively responsible positions
- Learning: New programs developed show management confidence
- Leadership: Demonstrated ability to organize and implement new programs

References

- Who they are: Are they from current or former supervisors or friends?
- What they say: Do they indicate positive contributions made by applicant?
- What they don't say: Do they avoid commenting on specific questions you are concerned about?

16. **Select the 3 to 5 most competitive candidates to interview in person** after reviewing the applications received. If the applicants are not satisfactory, it is better to re-advertise the position than to lower the standards for the job. Make sure the salary is high enough to attract candidates of the desired caliber.

17. **Send the candidates to be interviewed more detailed information about the library and the community** before they come for the interview. The full packet should also include:
- Description of the library's overall program and plan, including any printed materials, such as annual reports.
 - Current information about the community, including a description and demographics.
 - Information about any significant trends or changes anticipated.
18. **Set a positive and comfortable tone for the interviews.** Provide a tour of the library and allow the candidate to talk with staff members in addition to the search committee. Set a time for the candidate to meet with some or all of the staff for an informal getting-to-know-you/us question and answer time. Have a copy of the library's Policy Handbook and/or Employee Handbook available for the candidate to read.

Interviews must be held in open session. The public may attend interviews, but they are not permitted to ask questions or make statements during interviews.

Rotate the asking of interview questions [developed in Step #14] around the search committee members.

Allow adequate time for candidate response and discussion. The interview is a mutual evaluation process. The committee should provide the candidate with a fair, accurate picture of the library, working conditions, and expectations.

Allow time between interviews to complete evaluation sheets while the committee members' reactions to candidates are still fresh.

19. **Interview the applicants in a professional fashion.**

During the interview, there are specific areas which are considered discriminatory and about which a board is not legally permitted to ask.

Illegal Questions

There are specific discrimination laws which prevent employers from asking certain questions during the interview process.

- Marital status, sexual preference, maiden name, spouse's name or occupation.
- Nationality, religion, widowed, divorced, separated status.
- Age, height, weight.
- Color of eyes, hair skin, age of children, arrangement for care of minor children.
- Plans to have children, urogenital health, pregnancy, smoking, physical defects, illnesses, unless related to ability to perform; psychiatric hospitalization.
- Citizenship (except for the questions "Are you a U.S. citizen?" and "If not, are you legally in this country and legally able to work here?").
- Military experience, type of discharge.
- Education, previous experience – unless directly related to job requirements
- Questions relating to specific handicaps, health, and diseases (except for "Do you have any physical or mental disability which would prevent you from performing the job as described in the job description and the interview process?").
- For questions on crimes, you may ask whether a person has been convicted of a felony or whether the person has any felony charges pending against them. You may not, however, ask about arrests.
- Candidate for public office; membership in labor organization.

NOTE: The "illegal" questions may not be asked on the pre-employment written application form nor during the pre-employment interview process. Such information may be required subsequent to hiring (to establish insurance, tax reporting, etc.) The problem arises if an applicant is asked an illegal question, answers it, and the board does not hire that applicant. In that case, the applicant may file a suit against the library board for discrimination in hiring.

To safeguard against asking any illegal questions, it is a good idea for the library board to **have a standard list of questions** [see Step #14] which are asked of each applicant. Since the questions are identical and asked in the same order for each applicant, this not only helps protect against illegal questions, but it also helps to focus the library board's questioning on pertinent questions relating to the applicant's job-related abilities. Also, by asking the same questions of each applicant, it is easier to compare applicants when the interview process is completed.

20. **Develop a standardized competencies evaluation sheet.** During the interviews, the interview committee can be evaluating the same characteristics.

21. **Answer the finalists' questions openly.** Be frank about the board's expectations, what the job has to offer, and any unusual problems the new director may be facing.

22. **Select the best candidate** and submit the selection to the full board. A formal motion and vote should confirm.
23. **Telephone the successful applicant to offer the position.**
24. **Notify the successful candidate in writing and get an acceptance in writing.** In the letter, include the details of the appointment: salary, benefits, evaluation probationary period, starting date, etc. Include a second copy for the appointee to sign and return.
25. **Notify the unsuccessful candidates in writing that a director has been selected ONLY AFTER the acceptance has been received.** Thank them for their application. Be sure to wish them well in their further career.
26. **Send an announcement to the local media** after the successful candidate accepts.
27. **Appoint a trustee to be available for the first few months** of the director's tenure to answer questions.
28. **Plan a welcoming reception for the new director with staff, local community leaders and friends.** Invite the local media to cover the event and do an interview with the new director.
29. **Keep all the paperwork** connected with the hiring process on file.

Editor's Note:

These steps have been prepared to help guide public library board members in their search for a new director. This process is taken from the editor's experiences working with library boards in the Central Kansas Library System and the Nolichucky Regional Library. Additional ideas were gleaned from the Trustee Handbooks of California, Idaho, Kansas, Michigan, and Wisconsin, as well as from the Detroit Suburban Librarians' Roundtable Succession Planning Committee.

Although geared primarily to Tennessee conditions, these steps are easily adaptable to other regions of the country. Many thanks to Patti Butcher, Judy Greeson, Betty Jo Jarvis, Teddy Malone, Polly Potter, Susan Rogers, and Lynette Sloan who were kind enough to review early drafts and offer suggestions for improvement. This final product is solely the responsibility of the editor.

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Further detailed information about a search can be found in:

Selecting a Library Director; A Workbook for Members of a Selection Committee. *Rev. ed. Jack Cole and Suzanne H. Mahmoodi. Friends of the Library Development and Services Library. 440 Capitol Square Building. 550 Cedar Street. St. Paul, Minnesota 55101. 1996. [especially for a suggested process timeline and the multiple samples of worksheets and forms recommended in The Steps above, particularly the applicants' "Competency Comparison Chart" on pages 41-42 and a form for "How to Make Telephone Reference Calls" on pages 37-38.]*

Securing a New Library Director. *Rev. ed. ALTA Publications No. 1. Andrew Geddes and James A. Hess. American Library Trustee Association, 1979/1985.*

Working Together: A How-to-do-It Manual for Trustees and Librarians. *James Swan. Neal-Schuman, 1992. [especially Chapter 4: "Hiring a Librarian," pages 53-70; and the "Worksheet for Hiring a Librarian" on page 55.]*

Hiring Library Employees. *Richard E. Rubin. Neal-Schuman, 1993. [especially Appendix E: "Questions That Should Not Be Asked in an Interview," pages 187-188.]*

**[Name of] Public Library
[Name of City], Tennessee**

Application for Employment

as

Library Director

Return this completed application to:

**[Name of Person], Chair
Search Committee
[Name of] Public Library
[Name of City], Tennessee [Zip Code]**

NO TELEPHONE CALLS PLEASE

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

To Applicant: *Federal and State Laws require that all applicants be considered without regard to race, religion, sex, age, marital status, or national origin.*

PERSONAL

(PLEASE PRINT) Date _____

Name _____ Social Security No. _____
Last First Middle

Present Address _____
Street City State Zip

Telephone Number _____ How long have you lived at present address? _____

Previous address _____ How long? _____
Street City State Zip

Have you worked for us before? _____ If YES, when? _____

List any relatives/friends working for us _____

EDUCATION (PLEASE ATTACH A COMPLETE RESUME)

Name and Location of Schools	Course of Study	Dates Attended	Degree Earned
HIGH SCHOOL			
COLLEGE			
GRADUATE SCHOOL			
OTHER (Specify)			

PRIOR EMPLOYMENT (PLEASE ATTACH A COMPLETE RESUME)

[Check box next to employer's name indicating those you do not wish us to contact.]

Name and address List name of supervisor for each position	From	To	Period Start	Title Final	Salary Leaving	Reason for
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						
<input type="checkbox"/>						

PERSONAL REFERENCES

Name and Address (Not former employers or relatives)	Telephone

SUPPLEMENTAL QUESTIONS

(Directions: Please describe your experience and qualifications in answer to the following questions; do not put "see resume."

Please feel free to use additional pages if necessary to respond adequately to these questions.)

1. Do you have a legal right to work in the United States? Yes___ No___
2. Have you ever been convicted of a felony? Yes___ No___ If yes, explain.
3. Have you ever been disciplined or fired? Yes___ No___ If yes, explain.
4. Can you type? Yes___ No___
5. List any reason known to you why you might be unable to perform consistently and promptly the duties of the position.

6. List any special qualifications or skills you feel make you qualified for this position.

7. What did you like best about your most recent position?

8. What did you like least about your most recent position?

9. Describe your supervisory experience.

10. Describe your experience in the fiscal management of a library.

11. Describe your experience in personnel management and development.

12. What tasks would you assign to people who have volunteered for the library and how would you organize them?

13. Describe your experience in working with a library board of trustees.

14. Describe your experience in library program development.

15. How would you go about designing a program to promote the library to the community?

16. Describe your experience in community involvement and representing a library.

17. Describe your qualifications in the use of technology in a library and specifically your expertise with computers.

18. Please check each space and sign below:

_____ I certify that the information provided by me in this application is true and complete to the best of my knowledge.

_____ I hereby authorize the **[Name of]** Public Library Search Committee or its agents to investigate all statements contained in this application for employment as may be necessary in arriving at an employment decision.

_____ I hereby acknowledge that any employment relationship with the **[Name]** Public Library is, in keeping with Tennessee state law, of an “*at will*” nature, which means that the Employee may resign at any time and the Employer may discharge the Employee at any time with or without cause. It is further understood this “*at will*” employment relationship may not be changed by any written document or by conduct unless such change is specifically acknowledged in writing by action of the **[Name]** Public Library.

_____ In the event of employment, I understand that false or misleading information given in my application or interview(s) may result in discharge. I understand also that I am required to abide by all rules and regulations as set forth by the **[Name]** Public Library.

_____ I have read the job description for the advertised position and know of no reason I cannot perform the tasks as outlined.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Sample Library Director Position Description

[Note: This is only an example of a director's job description. It should be edited to reflect local needs and conditions.]

POSITION TITLE: Library Director

SUPERVISION AND DIRECTION

The Library Director will receive general supervision and direction from the Library Board. The Library Director shall comply with all established policies and operational procedures associated with the proper conduct of a public library.

POSITION REQUIREMENTS

Education: A Masters of Library Science (MLS) degree from an ALA accredited graduate school. The ability to operate personal computers and associated software on a routine basis. Knowledge of automated office equipment is desirable. The ability to deal effectively and courteously with the public consisting of all ages and personalities is required.

Experience: Three years of progressively responsible public library experience or five years of experience in a service institution with comparable demands and responsibilities (i.e., staff supervision, working directly with the public, working with governing boards or bodies).

Physical: The work environment consists primarily of indoor activities. Normal/corrected eyesight and hearing within normal range is required. Must be able to lift and carry books and/or cartons of books weighing up to 40 pounds on an occasional basis and must be able to lift and carry books up to 10 pounds on a regular basis. The Library Director must have a valid motor vehicle operator's license and be able to drive to meetings, training, and other events.

Appropriate dress, as for a business office, is required at all times while working in or representing the library.

POSITION SUMMARY

Under the direct supervision of the public library board of trustees, the library director is responsible for the operations of the library and the development and implementation of its service program, including:

- a. assisting the board with long-range planning and policy development and managing all library resources, including human resources;
- b. organizing the acquisitions, access, storage, and control of the collections;
- c. designing and implementing services and programs for customers of all ages;
- d. overseeing the maintenance and safety of the library building and grounds.

The library director hires and supervises all assistants, substitutes, and volunteers who work in the library.

The library director shall subscribe to the *Library Bill of Rights*, the *Freedom to Read*, the *Freedom to View* statements, and the *Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees*.

SPECIFIC RESPONSIBILITIES

Administrative Services:

1. Serve as the library's executive officer.
2. Serve as the technical adviser to the board.
3. Implement the policies of the library as established by the board.
4. Prepare the draft of the annual library budget for board discussion and approval.
5. Participate in the presentation of the adopted budget to local officials.
6. Receive and expend library funds according to established guidelines, and maintain accurate and up-to-date records showing the status of library finances.
7. Recruit, select, hire, supervise, evaluate, and terminate if necessary, library staff in conformity with library policy and state and federal law (and any applicable local civil service regulations and/or union contracts).
8. Prepare library board meeting agendas and necessary reports in cooperation with the library board president, and notify board members of scheduled meetings.
9. Prepare state annual report for review and approval by the library board.
10. Inform and advise the library board as to local, regional, state, and national developments in the library field, and work to maintain communication with other area libraries and the library system.

Collection Management:

11. Select or direct the selection of materials for all media and all age groups, based on the library's approved collection development policy.
12. Catalog and classify library materials according to accepted standards and maintain the public catalog.
13. Process materials to provide appeal, protection, and control.
14. Develop and maintain a regular weeding schedule.
15. Periodically review the collection development policy and make recommendations to the library board for revisions.
16. Oversee the shelving and organization of materials.
17. Prepare and distribute overdue notices to users with overdue or lost materials.
18. Maintain an accurate and up-to-date database of customer registrations and activities, including information adequate to support reimbursement requests for nonresident borrowing.

Service and Service Promotion:

19. Develop and execute an array of service programs to address the various needs of customers and to make the library more accessible to all. These might include: preparation and dissemination of bibliographies of popular topics and genre collections; tours of the library for school, daycare, and homeschooling groups; inclusion of interesting displays of an educational or cultural nature; presentations to local organizations or groups on the benefits offered by the library; provision of story time sessions for small children, and teen and adult book discussion sessions; support of a summer reading program; acquisition of special materials and provision of accommodations to encourage use of the library by individuals with special needs; development of a homebound service for residents unable to visit the library.

20. Provide friendly and efficient direct assistance to customers checking out materials, requesting directional or community information, or seeking materials or information on specific topics.
21. Prepare news releases and submissions to the media to announce new or special services and events that spotlight the library.
22. Assist and guide local volunteer groups (e.g., Library Friends) who wish to help with library promotion, fundraising, and enhancement of services.
23. Prepare grant applications, when grant opportunities are offered, in order to supplement local funding of library operations and development.
24. Maintain records showing all programs offered and number of attendees at each program.
25. Continually investigate the value, costs, and logistics of adding library services, new media, and new technologies in order to keep the library current and proactive in its service provision to the public.
26. Conduct ongoing evaluations of existing library programs, services, policies, and procedures, and submit recommendations for improvements to the library board.

Facilities Management:

27. Oversee care and maintenance of the library building and grounds.
28. Oversee the work of custodial staff.
29. Regularly review building needs and advise the board in its planning for future expansion or development.
30. Assess the adequacy of existing facilities in regard to the provision of automated services.

ESSENTIAL FUNCTIONS AND KNOWLEDGE

1. Excellent interpersonal skills.
2. Ability to effectively communicate ideas and information in both verbal and written form.
3. Ability to work with governing boards, community groups and elected officials, and make presentations to them.
4. Knowledge of public library philosophy, principles, and procedures which will allow effective recommendations to the board and sound decision making when faced with a wide range of circumstances.
5. Ability to supervise staff and volunteers and delegate responsibility in an effective manner.
6. Ability to read and comprehend print information, including technical, statistical, and financial information.
7. Ability to locate and retrieve library materials in a variety of formats throughout the building, as well as from remote locations through networks including the Internet.
8. Ability to assist customers with location and retrieval of materials or information by title, subject, and interest of library customers.
9. Knowledge and ability to perform basic computer operations and troubleshoot problems, and to manage an automated circulation system and access external databases.
10. Ability to understand and implement instructions and directions.
11. Ability to establish and maintain proper priorities and meet deadlines.
12. Ability to work within a confidential environment.
13. Ability to produce and maintain accurate files and reports.

14. Ability to use and manage office equipment including a telephone system, fax machine, copier, and security systems.
15. Ability to lift up to 40 pounds.
16. Knowledge and ability to type, sort and file.
17. Ability to work hours and assignments as required by the library board.

This job description has been adapted from *Trustee Essentials: A Handbook for Wisconsin Public Library Trustees*, developed by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, 2002.

Statement of Professional Ethics

- I. We provide the highest level of service to all library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources; equitable service policies; equitable access; and accurate, unbiased, and courteous responses to all requests.
- II. We uphold the principles of intellectual freedom and resist all efforts to censor library resources.
- III. We protect each library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received and resources consulted, borrowed, acquired or transmitted.
- IV. We recognize and respect intellectual property rights.
- V. We treat co-workers and other colleagues with respect, fairness and good faith, and advocate conditions of employment that safeguard the rights and welfare of all employees of our institutions.
- VI. We do not advance private interests at the expense of library users, colleagues, or our employing institutions.
- VII. We distinguish between our personal convictions and professional duties and do not allow our personal beliefs to interfere with fair representations of the aims of our institutions or the provision of access to their information resources.
- VIII. We strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing our own knowledge and skills, by encouraging the professional development of co-workers, and by fostering the aspirations of potential members of the profession.

Developed and Adopted by the
American Library Association
24 June 1995

[Name of] Library System
CANDIDATE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS
[Month, Date, Year]

CANDIDATE: **[Name of Person]**

1. What was it about this position that attracted you to apply?
How do you feel about relocating to [Name of City/County]?
2. Tell us about your background and experiences that you think make you qualified for this position.
3. How would you describe your working style? Please be specific in describing how you would supervise employees and interact with county/city commissioners and managers.
4. How would you handle a situation in which an employee disregarded your directive or instructions?
5. Describe how you would handle hiring and firing an employee.
6. Describe your experiences and any projects that you have initiated with public libraries as a user, volunteer, or paid staff member.
7. Describe your experience with children's and young adult programming.
8. What do you see as a library director's role in relation to the board of trustees and regional and state libraries?
9. Let's say you have a board member who is creating problems for the library. How would you handle this kind of situation?
10. How would you go about preparing and controlling the budget?
11. Our director has had the responsibility for the library's bookkeeping (writing checks, ledger keeping); how do you feel about assuming this responsibility? What experience do you have keeping books? Can you be bonded?
12. What do you think is a library director's role in fundraising?
13. Describe your work with computers.
14. What experience have you had with a building program? What do you see as the library director's role in a building program?
15. What about your current job do you find the most unpleasant to do?
16. What do you like most about your work in your current position?
17. What do you see as the role of the library and library director in the community?
18. If you were chosen as our director, what are the first things you would do and like to have in place?
19. What are your expectations for this position and life in this community?
20. When are you available to start?
21. Do you have any specific questions about the job description?
22. Are there any questions that you have for us?

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS - A LONGER VERSION

(thanks to Susan Rogers, Director, Reelfoot Regional Library, Martin, Tennessee)

WARM-UP QUESTIONS:

- 1) What brought you to apply for this position?
- 2) Briefly, would you summarize your work history and education for me? (What have you been doing for the past ten years?)

LIBRARY-SPECIFIC:

- 1) What programs do you consider basic in a small-to-medium sized public library?
- 2) Would you articulate your vision for this library?
- 3) What role do you feel the public library should take with homeschoolers?
- 4) Are you comfortable with technology? It plays a major role in libraries today. You would have access to a regional technology coordinator in Martin and a Network Services Consultant out of Jackson, but you would be onsite and need to be knowledgeable of basic software programs. The library has an automated circulation system, and you would be responsible for overseeing that operation as well.
- 5) This job requires some early evening and Saturday hours. Do you have a problem with working extended hours—or a somewhat flexible working schedule?
- 6) The regional library provides continuing education opportunities for local public library directors and staff. Occasionally conferences, such as the Tennessee Library Association Conference held annually in a larger Tennessee city, or seminars will afford extended opportunities. Do you have a problem with out of town travel or with allowing your staff to travel? (NOTE: transportation for state-provided training is usually available through the regional library.)

WORK HISTORY:

- 1) Tell us what of your education and experience has prepared you for this position?
- 2) In addition, what personal qualities and qualifications do you have for this job?
- 3) What do you consider your most significant accomplishment in your current position? Why?
- 4) Why are you leaving your present job?

JOB PERFORMANCE:

- 1) Everyone has strengths and weaknesses as workers. What do you consider your strong points for this job?
- 2) What would you say are areas needing improvement?
- 3) What kind of people do you find it most difficult to work with? Why?
- 4) Can you give me an example of your ability to manage or supervise others?
- 5) What is your position on staff empowerment and delegation, in general?
- 6) Have you performed staff evaluations in other positions you have held? Would you find that difficult?
- 7) What would you say is the most important thing you are looking for in a job?
- 8) What are some of the things on your last job that you feel you have done particularly well?
- 9) What were some of the things about your last job that you found most difficult to do?
- 10) What are some things you particularly like about your current job (or last job)?
- 11) How do you feel about the way you and others in the department were managed by your supervisor?

CAREER – GOALS:

- 1) What kind of job do you see yourself holding five years from now?
- 2) How does this job fit in with your overall career goals?
- 3) What would you most like to accomplish if you had this job?

SELF-ASSESSMENT:

- 1) What kind of tasks do you feel most confident in performing?
- 2) Can you describe for me a difficult obstacle you have had to overcome? How did you handle it? How do you feel this experience affected your personality or ability?
- 3) Do you consider yourself a self-starter? If so, explain why (and give examples).
- 4) What do you consider to be your greatest achievements to date? Why?
- 5) What gives you the greatest satisfaction at work?
- 6) What frustrates you the most? How do you usually cope with this?

LEADERSHIP:

- 1) The present staff have worked together for some time. A new staff member will have a significant impact on the group dynamics. What would be your first move to build an effective working team?
- 2) What approach would you take in getting your people to accept your ideas or department goals?
- 3) What especially would you do to set an example for your employees?
- 4) How would you get people who do not want to work together to establish a common approach to a problem?
- 5) How would you describe your basic leadership style? Give specific examples of how you practice this.

ORAL PRESENTATION SKILLS:

- 1) Have you ever done any public or group speaking? Recently? How did it go?
- 2) Economic times dictate that library services be sold to our public officials. This job requires the promotion of the library to public citizens and officials. Do you feel comfortable making public appearances and presentations before groups?

WRITTEN COMMUNICATION SKILLS:

- 1) What kind of writing have you done—for a group or for an individual?
- 2) In the past, have you been involved in major reports that were written?

STABILITY AND MATURITY:

- 1) Describe your most significant success and failure in the last two years.
- 2) What do you like to do best?
- 3) What do you like to do least?

INTEREST IN SELF DEVELOPMENT:

- 1) What kind of books and other publications interest you?
- 2) Have you taken a management development course? Would you be interested in the Public Library Management Institute? (If they do not have a MLS)

WRAP-UP:

- 1) If you are selected for this position, when would you be available to begin work?
- 2) Is there anything else you would like to tell us?
- 3) Do you have any questions for us?

American Libraries
JobLIST Online
<http://joblist.ala.org/index.cfm>

Job Ad Rates

American Libraries magazine places library job ads and other advertisements on the ALA Web site that will not appear in any issue of the print magazine.

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Library Hotline

Job Ad Rates

Library Hotline is a weekly newsletter published each Monday.

Line rates are \$31.50 per/line (approx. 55 characters/line) (4 line minimum); display rates \$320.00 per/inch (1 inch minimum).

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