

Welcome!

While we're waiting for the meeting to start, there might be some awkward silence! If you'd like to, you can:

- **Share in just a few words, what your ideal library board experience is...how do you know when it's all working?**
- Get that last-minute tea, water, or snack!
- Kick back and relax. We'll start in a few minutes.



IFLS Trustee Webinar Series

Webinar I: Understanding your role as a library trustee
November 2020



Introductions



Webinar series overview

November 5, 12-1: Understanding your role

November 12, 12-1: Understanding the library

November 19, 12-1: Connecting the library and community

December 3, 7-8pm: Bringing it all together, a conversation



Board

Library
Staff

Library
Director

Foundation

Friends

LIBRARY



ECOSYSTEM

County

Library
System

State Law

Community

Municipality

Imagine....

- What is the ideal experience or what the best board experience might be

Library Board Responsibilities

Exclusive control of all library expenditures.

Purchasing of a library site and the erection of the library building when authorized.

Exclusive control of all lands, buildings, money, and property acquired or leased by the municipality for library purposes.

Supervising the administration of the library and appointing a librarian.

Prescribing the duties and compensation of all library employees

Library Director Responsibilities

Overseeing the library budget and preparing reports as required by the board.

Managing of library collections.

Hiring, training, supervising, and scheduling other library personnel.

Supervising circulation of material and record keeping.

Cooperating with the board, community officials, and groups in planning library services and publicizing library programs within the community.

Supervising the maintenance of all library facilities and equipment.

What is a Trustee?



“part of a trustee board, trustees serve on a volunteer basis, can be elected or appointed to a library board for a period of time, and are tasked with the duty of helping to direct the funds and policies of an institution.”

-- I Love Libraries, an initiative of the American Library Association

What is a Trustee?



Participate as a member of a team (the library board) to protect and advance the interests of the broader community by effectively governing the operations and promoting the development of the local public library.

--DPI definition

OK, but what if we thought about being a Trustee a little differently?

Servant



Qualities



In Action

Listening

Empathy

Healing

Awareness

Community conversations

Regular check-ins with your director

Reaching out to those who don't use the library

Regular board meeting attendance and participation

Qualities



In Action

Persuasion

Conceptualization

Foresight

Stewardship

Use consensus as a basis of decision making

Strategic planning

Data collection and usage

Careful, responsible budgeting; understanding library finances and community needs

Qualities



In Action

Commitment to the growth of people

Building community

Commitment to continuing education

Take part in and attend community wide events, informally meet with members of the community; build partnerships

What is a Trustee?



- Shares power
- Encourages library directors and staff to gain skills and knowledge beyond their own
- Uses consensus building and listens carefully to guide the library
- Places high value on the community, both the library community and the larger community
- Is committed to the growth and improvement of those being led.

How do you embody servant leadership?

What ISN'T a Trustee?

- Rubber stamp
- Library boss
- Killer of ideas



How can you best support your
director?

Understand how your library functions



- What services does the library offer?
- What are the touchstones for the library?
- Where does the money come from? Where does it go?
- What are the legal obligations of the library and trustees?

Communicate openly and clearly



- Sharing knowledge (or lack thereof!)
- Sharing feedback
 - Ongoing
 - Annually

Participate actively



- Be prepared for meetings
- Offer thoughts/ideas
- Focus on *what* you accomplish rather than how fast you can accomplish it.
(and accomplishment is not always signaled by a motion)

Be a conduit between the library and the community



- Share what you hear (empathetically)
- Understand issues and prepare responses
- Be an advocate

Do the little things



- Respond
- Meet deadlines
- Visit the library
- Check in with the director

If nothing else...

You can best support your director through
leadership



[Working Together: Roles and Responsibilities Guideline](#)

[Trustee Essentials: A Handbook for Wisconsin Public Library Trustees](#)

[Wisconsin Trustee Training Week](#)

[Center for Servant Leadership](#)

Closing

- Homework: spend 5-10 minutes reflecting on what you learned today and write down at least one thing you can use to strengthen your role as a trustee at your library.
- Extra credit: Complete the Using Your Passions as a Library Trustee worksheet
- Next webinar is November 12, 12-1: Understanding the library
- Thank you for your time and energy!

Questions, comments? Reach out to Melissa McLimans at melissa@wils.org

