

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

DIRECTOR SEARCH PROCESS

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An Overview of the Search Process

Finding a good director is one of the most important duties a board of trustees will ever have. Trustees may often serve for a period of some years and never face the challenge of selecting a new library director. It is not surprising, therefore, that the selection of a director can be a strange and new experience for board members. A trustee's apprehension about the process may be further compounded by the fact that in some cases board members have had little or no experience in personnel selection. Nevertheless, selecting a new library director is a major responsibility of the library board and one which they should not delegate.

How should the library board recruit and select a new director? What are some of the challenges that the board will face, and what are some of the decisions that must be made? In this Director Search Packet there are many recommendations and ideas to help answer these questions.

A realistic assessment of the amount of time needed to find a new director is important. It may take four months or longer to advertise, consider applications, interview several top candidates, and wait for a decision from the candidate selected.

Boards should resist the tendency to postpone action, even if a competent person is available to direct the library during the interim period. Establishing a calendar and an action plan for the search process minimizes delays.

Action Plan

An action plan is necessary to start the search process promptly and lead to a successful conclusion. The action plan should be developed as soon as the board receives a resignation in writing from the departing director. It should include target dates for completion of each step, including any revisions to the job description, advertising, interviewing candidates, offering the job, having the new director begin work, and orienting the new director to the library and community. (A sample action plan is attached.) The action plan should include the following steps:

1. Review of the library's existing personnel policies and procedures in regard to hiring.

If the library is a municipal department or its employees are municipal employees, trustees must review the relevant city/town personnel policies and procedures, as well as applicable town charter language. Requirement of these policies and procedures must be met during the hiring process.

Several state and federal laws also affect the way the hiring process is conducted. They are mentioned briefly in Section 9 below. When in doubt, library boards should seek legal advice.

2. Consideration of whether a member of the staff should be made acting director.

If an acting director is to be named, duties and responsibilities should be clarified, and, if necessary, that person's other assignments deferred or delegated to make time for the temporary responsibilities. Compensation should also be increased to reflect the greater responsibilities. If there is an assistant director, that individual is generally appointed acting director; where there is no assistant director, a staff member with a broad working knowledge of library operations and the ability to communicate well with the board, city/town officials, staff, and the public, should be appointed. If the Board does not have

anyone qualified to be named acting director, it may to hire a temporary director. This discussion needs to be had early in the process.

3. Review of the attributes and qualifications needed in a director.

In order to identify which individual is the best person for the job, the board must know exactly what kind of person it is looking for before it starts to look.

In Massachusetts, a library director must meet minimum educational requirements specified in Massachusetts Minimum Standards of Free Public Library Service to qualify for the Library Incentive and Municipal Equalization Grants (also known as “LIG” and “MEG” or “State Aid”). Most boards decide to establish the MLS (Master of Library Science) as the minimum qualification for their director, even when the degree is not required by the State Aid program. The degree is not required in communities with populations under 10,000; all other communities must have a director with an MLS. Reference to the library’s current long-range plan will assist the board in determining the skills needed by the new director.

4. Allocation of funds for advertising, recruitment, and selection expenses.

Selecting a competent and qualified new director is an infrequent and extremely important responsibility of the board. The board needs to decide what, if any, compensation can be offered to candidates traveling long distances and how a candidate qualifies for compensation. Common practice is no compensation for in-state and New England candidates, and airfare and lodging for finalists returning for second interviews before the full board. One way to keep costs down is to schedule preliminary interviews by telephone or electronically for distant candidates. Skype and other online communication services have been used successfully by some search committees.

5. Review and, if necessary, revise the written job description.

By defining duties, responsibilities, and qualifications, the job description provides information essential to both the board and candidates for director. If no job description exists, one should be prepared. A sample job description, which can be adapted to a specific library, is included in this packet.

6. Determination of the salary range that can be offered, and whether the starting salary is negotiable.

A competitive salary is one of the most important factors in attracting qualified applicants. The board must know how much it can offer. This may require discussion with the personnel board or department. Trustees should be realistic about any shortcomings of the salary being paid the departing director and be prepared to mount a campaign for an increase in order to attract better candidates.

Salary must be a major concern of the board. Compensation should be high enough to attract the best candidates and keep the person ultimately selected for a reasonable number of years. In determining salary level, boards should consider salaries paid to directors of similar libraries, and look at salaries for positions in the community requiring similar skills, such as administrative positions in the local school system and of the department heads in city/town government. Boards need to know what circumstances permit them to start a new director at a salary level above the initial step. Boards should keep in mind that the library director is a department head who, in addition to extensive specialized knowledge and expertise in library service, also has managerial and operational responsibilities similar to those of other department heads. These responsibilities must be taken into account in establishing a fair and equitable salary.

Some boards of incorporated libraries have the authority to independently set salaries, but in most cases salary matters are determined by municipal government. Even when this is the case, often the starting salary can be above the minimum established for the range; sometimes it is possible to have the range increased. All library boards should make every effort to ensure that salary levels are as attractive and competitive as possible.

Each year the MA Board of Library Commissioners (MBLC) publishes public library data reports collected from the Annual Report Information Survey (ARIS) that libraries submit each year. Information about salaries in Massachusetts libraries of all sizes is available on the MBLC website <http://mblc.state.ma.us>. Staff at the MBLC is happy to assist you with finding this information.

7. Preparation of advertisements.

In order to reach as many potential candidates as possible, director positions should always be advertised. Sample advertisements and locations to advertise are included in this packet.

Job advertisements should be placed as soon as possible. The advertisements should include a brief description of the job and the required qualifications and experience defined by the board. It should also include a salary range, address where to send applications, and deadline date for receipt of applications. In the advertisement, candidates should be asked to submit a letter stating interest and qualifications for the position, a resume, and the names of several, usually three, work-related references. The letter provides an opportunity to expand on information contained in the resume, and it also enables the board to judge a candidate's ability to express himself or herself in writing.

Job notices should be posted on the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners Web site. You may enter job notices directly into the MBLC Web site at <http://mblc.state.ma.us>. Have library staff post on the networks' listservs. CLAMS, CW/MARS, MVLC, NOBLE, OCLN, SAILS and MLS (Massachusetts Library System) have listservs that will reach a wider audience. Newspaper ads can be expensive. Consider placing ads in local newspapers for public relations purposes. Most job hunters will use the Web to locate available positions. National publications, such as *American Libraries* and *Library Journal* have Web components for advertising positions. Affirmative action guidelines and policies should be followed.

Agree on a closing date for receipt of applications. It is recommended that at least a month be allowed from the time a job notice is posted. Choose a member of the screening committee to whose name and address applications will be sent.

8. Decision on procedures for the screening process.

All applications must be screened to separate those candidates who merit further consideration from those who do not. The board needs to decide whether a subcommittee or the full board will do the preliminary screening of applications and resumes by weeding out candidates who are clearly not qualified for further consideration, or whether a subcommittee will conduct preliminary interviews and select several finalists for consideration. If the board decides on a screening subcommittee, it is recommended the team be three to five members. (A sample charge from the trustees to a screening committee is attached.) Keep in mind Open Meeting Law when determining the subcommittee. When a subcommittee is used, finalists are then interviewed by the full board in open meeting.

Early in the process, the board should decide on the role of library staff and communicate that decision to the staff. A common practice is to include a staff member on the screening committee; frequently, staff members select a representative. Other practices are to ask a senior staff member to take candidates who come for interviews on a tour of the building or to arrange for the candidates to talk with staff over lunch or at an informal meeting. Observations obtained from staff in these ways can provide valuable insights about a candidate, which the board itself may not be in a position to see. In this instance, there should be a mechanism for staff to communicate their reaction to candidates to the board.

To the extent possible, efforts should be made to have candidates interact with the same group of staff members, so that the staff's observations can be more comparative and useful. If these contacts with the staff are likely to be strong factors in the final selection process, it is essential that the same staff members meet all the candidates and give feedback to the board in a consistent manner.

In the selection process, the role of the director who is leaving should be limited to furnishing information about the process and the job itself and perhaps suggesting names for consideration by the board. The incumbent should not directly engage in the recruitment or selection process.

As the applications are received, they should be promptly acknowledged by a form letter [sample attached.] If there are unusual delays in the process, inform candidates of the revised target dates. In screening the applications, the board (or screening committee) should keep in mind the responsibilities of the job as stated in the job description and the qualifications for which the board is looking. Boards should resist the tendency to favor candidates who have an interesting and unusual background, but who lack the background needed in a public library director. Boards should also be alert to red flags in resumes. Red flags include gaps in employment, numerous job changes, decreasing responsibility or noticeable lateral movement. Applicants who do not meet the minimum criteria can be notified at once that they are not among the more qualified candidates who will receive further consideration.

The board should consider a mailing to interview candidates containing a data sheet describing the position, starting salary and benefits, information about the library and community, and a copy of the job description. A copy of the library's long-range plan could be a useful document to send to candidates as well.

9. The Interview

An interview is one of the board's best opportunities to further explore a candidate's ability to do the job. The board's preparation for interviewing should be thorough and done well ahead of time. Preparation for both the preliminary and final interviews is similar. The board should agree on a set of common questions to be asked of all candidates, at both the preliminary and final interviews, so that responses can be compared equally, but it should also be prepared to ask follow-up questions to augment information given by the candidate's answers. These common questions should be used for any telephone or electronic interviews as well. Questions should be open-ended so that the candidate is encouraged to provide as much information as possible. The board should also encourage the candidate to ask questions he/she has about the library and the position. Care should be taken to avoid dominating the discussion or asking leading questions. To compare candidates fairly and accurately, it is important that all board or screening committee members attend all interviews. Sample interview questions and a rating sheet are included in this packet.

The board must be aware of Equal Opportunity Laws as they relate to personnel selection and employment. In general, Equal Opportunity Laws prohibit employment discrimination based on race,

color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or handicap, and, in Massachusetts, sexual preference. To be in conformance with these laws means that application forms and interview questions must be free from bias. Questions should not be asked about marital status, age, number of children, spouse's occupation, height, weight, or other items unrelated to an individual's qualifications and ability to meet job requirements. Many questions can be asked in an interview, but they must be job-related and focus on work experience and ability.

The Massachusetts Open Meeting Law is another piece of legislation which applies to the selection and interview process. This Act requires that all meetings of public boards be posted at least 48 hours beforehand and that they be open to the public. After the meeting has convened, the board may vote to go into executive session for certain specific and limited purposes. The initial screening of candidates, including first-round interviews, may be done in executive session if an open meeting will have a detrimental effect on obtaining qualified applicants. If the entire board is doing initial interviews, consult with Town Counsel to be sure that the Open Meeting Law requirements are being met.

After the initial screening, consideration of the candidates must become public. Deliberations regarding criteria, recruiting methods, etc. and final interviews and selection must be conducted in open meetings. Search or screening committees appointed by a public body are also subject to the Open Meeting Law. In most cases, the public will not be interested in attending interviews or board meetings where the search is discussed, but since the final selection interviews are public meetings, boards should be aware that it is legal and proper for people who are not board members to attend.

An interview should not be rushed. An hour is generally sufficient time for the preliminary interview. More time should be allowed for the final interview.

The following guidelines may be helpful in preparing for the interview process:

- * Be aware of questions which violate the basic rights of candidates, such as "Are you married?" or "What clubs do you belong to?"
- * Prepare in advance and have written questions. The questions should be designed to assess the candidate's ability to successfully perform the responsibilities of the job as outlined in the job description and to "fit" the community. Remember that "the best person for the job" must be clearly defined in order to be recognized.
- * Conduct an interview in an area free from interruptions and distractions.
- * Ask about gaps in employment record, frequent job changes.
- * Use interview time wisely. Even the best interviewers will lose track of time, but strive to cover relevant topics, and control how time is being used.
- * Be an active listener and attentive to eye contact, body movement, common courtesy, respect, and other factors which may encourage or hinder an interview.
- * Write an appraisal of a candidate immediately following an interview. Create and use a form, or compose a meaningful narrative, but don't wait to write it down later. The sharpness of impressions will fade

quickly. Take notes; they are better than memory. A standard evaluation sheet that lists the agreed-upon attributes and qualifications necessary will be useful in this process [sample attached.]

- * Hold a second round of interviews for the best candidates from the first round if a clear choice is not obvious or questions remain. Plan on second interviews for the top three to five candidates, involving the full board.
- * Remember it is just as important for the board to make a good impression as it is for the candidate. If the board is to attract the best candidates available and ultimately be accepted by the very best one from among them, it must do all that it can to show itself and the library in the best possible light. Good candidates will have questions for the board, which the board should be prepared to answer. It is possible you may be interviewing a candidate who is also an applicant for another position.

If possible, it is preferable to have the candidates come for interviews on different days. If this is not possible, sufficient time should be allowed between interviews to allow one candidate to leave before another one arrives. Having candidates meet each other and wait until they are escorted into the interview room is awkward for all concerned.

Candidates should always be informed of the timetable for making a decision. They should be given an approximate date by which an appointment is anticipated, and should be advised subsequently if a significant delay occurs. In more than one instance, boards have lost their first choice for appointment because the candidate, having heard nothing for weeks after the interview, concluded he/she was no longer under serious considerations, and accepted another position.

10. Selection of a final candidate and job offer.

It is recommended that boards wait until after the first round of interviews so that only references of finalists need be checked, prior to making the final selection. At least three references should be contacted, and if previous employers are not listed as references, ask the candidate for the name of someone to contact. It is highly recommended that references always be contacted by phone, even if they have already responded in writing. This allows the reference to be more candid and may very well provide information not contained in a written reference. Under no circumstances should a job offer be made until references have been thoroughly checked and the board is satisfied that the references are as candid as possible. Information obtained from references should always be treated with discretion. Sample questions for references are included in this packet.

The final decision-making procedure will vary according to the outcome of the interviews. For example, sometimes one candidate will be commonly seen as head and shoulders above the others and a simple motion to appoint that candidate is the easiest step.

A suggested model for the decision-making discussion follows:

The chair reviews the attributes and qualifications outlined at the outset of the search process.

Interview notes and results of reference checks are reviewed.

The chair asks for a motion to nominate a final candidate; if there is one, parliamentary procedure is followed.

If no motion is offered, the Chair asks each trustee in turn if he/she would like to advocate for the appointment of a particular candidate. At the completion of that step, the Chair again asks for a motion to nominate a final candidate.

If there is no clear finalist, the search process should be re-initiated, with possible adjustments to ensure a successful process for the next time.

When the board has agreed on its top candidate, it should make a job offer without delay. A phone call should be made immediately, followed by a formal letter and a contract signed. The candidate should then accept the position in writing. The remaining finalists should be notified only after the offer has been accepted in writing. It is extremely important that all applicants, whether finalists or not, be notified as soon as they are no longer under consideration. This notification is always in writing, and often by telephone as well. Municipal Charter may have an impact on this part of the hiring process. Check to make sure that M.G.L Chapter 78 Section 11 hasn't been overwritten by a charter change.

The Due Process Law (M.G.L Chapter 78 Sections 33 & 34) states that Boards of Trustees must establish written book-selection policies and execute written employment contracts with library directors which outline the basic conditions of employment, including the procedure for dismissal. Having an employment contract helps both the board and the new director clarify their expectations in regard to responsibilities, salary, benefits, etc., and helps to prevent misunderstandings. A sample contract is included in this packet. Again, the Board should check Town Charter to be sure that this is something that they can do.

Boards should always be sensitive to applicants' need for discretion. Candidates must understand, however, that since the final selection interviews and discussions are held as open meetings, and minutes of trustees' meetings are public records, it may not be possible to keep applications of top contenders confidential.

11. Introduction of the New Director

If the new director is relocating to take the job, the board can help in the transition. A board member or someone with good knowledge of the community may provide for a short visit for house-hunting purposes. Information about housing, schools, and other local services should be provided to the new director; copies of the local newspaper will acquaint him or her with the community.

A welcoming reception attended by board members, Friends, staff, local officials, local media, and the public should be scheduled at a convenient time. The Chair or another board member should introduce the new director to other key people in the community as soon as convenient.

Within the first few weeks of the director's starting date, the board and he/she should set some short and long-term goals together to be used as a plan for the first evaluation period. (This may be a contractually set probationary period.) A sample evaluation form for the director is attached. Formal and informal evaluations should be done periodically.

Action Plan for Library Director Search Process

Task		Deadline	Completed
1.	Hiring policy reviewed		
2.	Acting director appointed		
3.	Job description reviewed/re-written		
4.	Funds for selection expenses allocated		
5.	Salary range determined		
6.	Job posting written		
7.	Advertising placed		
8.	Screening process determined		
9.	Application deadline		
10.	Screening committee recommendations deadline		
11.	Finalist selected		

Suggested Job Description for Library Director

The library director is responsible for the management and operation of the library and its program of services in accordance with policies established by the Board of Library Trustees. The director works in close cooperation with the board, serving as its advisor and as an active participant in policy and budget development, goal setting, planning, and evaluation. The board delegates to the director full authority in such areas as collection development, budget management, and personnel administration, selection, and supervision. The position is directly accountable to the board of library trustees.

Examples of Duties:

1. Supervises, directly or through delegating, library services, operations and activities, including but not limited to: materials selection, weeding and overall collection development; cataloging and other technical service operations; reference, children's, adult, young adult, and other services provided to the general public and special user groups; business and financial functions; community relations; library promotion; library building and grounds; personnel management.
2. Participates, with the Board of Trustees, in a continuing formal planning process which identifies and addresses community and library needs, provides direction for library development and serves as a base for evaluation of library effectiveness in relation to changing community needs.
3. Advises the board in library matters and keeps it informed of relevant issues and developments at the regional, state, and national level. Attends all board meetings, reports on library activities and important issues, participates actively in discussion and contributes ideas and suggestions during the decision-making process.
4. Makes policy recommendations to the board. Implements and interprets policies adopted by it. (Policies should include, but not necessarily be limited to, collection development, personnel, use of library facility, and circulation of materials.)
5. Has responsibility for budget management, including initial preparation of annual budget recommendations for Board approval and participation in presentation to municipal officials. Oversees the expenditure of funds and maintenance of financial records.
6. Selects, trains, supervises, and evaluates personnel.
7. Develops the library's collection in accordance with a Board-approved collection development policy.
8. Serves as the library's liaison with municipal government and the community in general. Speak before groups and boards as required.
9. Monitors local, state, and federal laws and regulations applicable to library operation and takes action to ensure compliance as appropriate.
10. Develops and implements a public relations program.
11. Other duties as required.

Requirements and Qualifications:

1. Demonstrated ability to work effectively with others.
2. Ability to speak and write effectively and clearly.
3. Leadership ability and a high degree of motivation, initiative, and resourcefulness.
4. Ability to exercise independent judgment in decision-making.
5. Intellectual curiosity and an appreciation of libraries.
6. General knowledge of library principles and practices.
7. Competent and comfortable with technology and the online environment.
8. Demonstrated management/supervisory experience.
9. Educational qualifications at least equal to those specified for library Directors in Massachusetts Minimum Standards for Free Public Library Service for communities in the appropriate population range.

Examples of Advertisements for Library Director

The advertisement should briefly describe the position's responsibilities and indicate the skills and knowledge which the Board concluded a candidate must have for favorable consideration and ultimately to perform the job well. It should also include salary range, address to which to send applications, and deadline date for receipt of applications. In the advertisement, applicants should be asked for a letter stating interest and qualifications for the position, a resume, and the names of several, usually three, work-related references.

Master of Library Science (MLS) Advertisements

LIBRARY DIRECTOR. Oversees staff of XX FTE, budget of \$XXXXXXX and collection of XXXXX. Building program under consideration. QUALIFICATIONS: MLS and three years of professional library experience after the MLS, or MLS and six years of experience prior to MLS which include administrative management and programming responsibility. Public speaking and successful grant writing experience a must; strong technology skills preferred. Salary: \$XXXXXXX - XXXXXXX, starting salary negotiable within the lower half of the range. Letter of application, resume, and names of three professional references to XXXXX, Trustee Chair, XXXXX Library,...by June 30th.

LIBRARIAN. Creative, energetic individual with a strong public service orientation needed to direct all phases of library operations in town of 18,000. MLS and three years of public library experience required; administrative experience desired. Salary range: \$XX,XXX - XX,XXX; starting salary negotiable. Letter of application, resume, and names of three professional references to XXXX, Screening Committee Chair, XXXX Public Library,...by September 13.

LIBRARIAN. MLS and administrative experience required. Responsible for the management of the library, supervision of personnel, and administration of the budget. Enthusiasm, flexibility, and self-motivation are essential. Closing date XXXX. Salary \$XXXXXX. Send resume and letter of application and names of three professional references to XXXX, Trustee Chair, XXXX Public Library.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR. Knowledge of public organization, administrative practices, and strong technology skills required plus ability to plan and coordinate the work of others and to work well with public officials and community organizations. Committed to public service. Interest in grant proposals and fund raising. Requirements: MLS plus eight years progressively responsible public library experience, including at least three as an administrator. Salary \$XXXXXX. Usual municipal benefits. Letter of application, resume, and names of five professional reference to XXXX, Screening Committee Chair, XXXX Public Library,...by Nov. 15th.

Sample Ads for Non-Master of Library Science. Possibly of use to communities under 10,000 population.

LIBRARIAN. Full time. Responsible for the management and operation of a XXXXX volume library serving a community of XXXX people with an annual budget of \$XXXXXX. Duties include book selection, staff supervision, and budget management. Requires resourceful, energetic individual able to communicate and work well with staff and public. BA/BS and two years of public library experience required; MLS or MLS candidate with library experience desirable. If the applicant selected is not an MLS or MLS candidate, the new director must attend training workshops on library skills. Salary range \$XXXXXX to \$XXXXXX in five steps. Letter of application, resume, and names of four professional references to XXXX, Screening Committee, XXX Public Library. Closing date: March 1st.

LIBRARIAN. Responsible for book selection, assisting the public, supervising volunteers, story hours, and library management. Recommends policies and budget to and works closely with Board. 14 hours a week, including one evening and Saturday afternoon; \$XX an hour; some benefits. Qualifications: BA/BS and enjoyment of books and people required. Successful candidate expected to attend training workshops on library skills. Send letter of application, resume, and names of three work-related references to XXXX, Trustee Chair, XXXX Public Library, by Jan. 15th.

LIBRARY DIRECTOR. Responsible for all phases of library operation. 15-20 hours a week; some evening and Saturday hours. Required: BA/BS; previous experience working with the public. Good organizational skills; attention to detail. Successful candidate expected to attend training workshops on library skills. Salary: \$XXXX. Letter of application, resume, and names of three work-related references to XXXX, Trustee Chair, XXXX Library, by Jan. 1st.

Places to Advertise for Library Director Candidates

Local Affirmative Action Compliance Officers may have additional suggestions/requirements for ad placement.

Always allow sufficient time for candidates to apply. Application deadlines that are too soon waste time, effort and advertising dollars in the long run.

Library Resources for All Director Advertisements

Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

Address: 98 North Washington Street, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02114-1918

Telephone: 617-725-1860; 800-952-7403 (*in-state*)

Email: vacancies@mblc.state.ma.us

Web Site: <http://mblc.state.ma.us/jobs/index.php>

How to Submit a Posting

Listings may be entered by the employer using our Web form.

All postings should include a closing date. If no closing date is given, the listing will automatically be removed at the end of six weeks.

Please Note: Unless otherwise indicated, employers subscribe to Affirmative Action/Equal Employment Opportunities Employment Practices. Certain position listings may be subject to the provisions of Chapter 78, Section 34, M.G.L. that requires employment contracts for public library employees not eligible for collective bargaining participation. Consult the Board of Library Commissioners for further details.

Listservs

Ads can also be placed on the Massachusetts Library System Allregions listserv. Your library director or staff can help you post the position.

Network Email Lists:

Your library director or staff can help you send out a job ad to the list serves of the local networks. CW/MARS, NOBLE, Minuteman, MVLC, SAILS, OCLN and CLAMS have e-mail groups that can send your ad out to all network members.

Job Posting Websites

REGIONAL

Simmons College, GSLIS Jobline

<http://www.simmons.edu/gslis/career/jobline/>

State of Rhode Island Office of Library and Information Services

<http://www.olis.ri.gov/services/jobline/index.php>

Southern Connecticut State University, Communication, Information & Library Science

<http://www.southernct.edu/ils/employmentandcareerresources/>

NATIONAL

American Library Association

Joblist

<http://joblist.ala.org/>

Library Journal

JobZone

<http://jobs.libraryjournal.com/>

LISJOBS.COM

<http://www.lisjobs.com/>

State/Regional Newspapers

Newspapers are one of the more costly sources in which to advertise, but have the advantage of reaching potential candidates in a specific geographic area. Placement of ads on Internet sites has replaced a heavy reliance on newspaper ads. Many local papers have web versions and will post positions on the web as well. As news papers are expensive; the board may want to advertise locally for public relations purposes only.

To ensure that ads are found by job seekers, they should be worded to begin with “Library” or “Librarian”; i.e., “Library Director,” not Director for Library in town of....”

Screening Committee Charge

The Board of Trustees of the _____ Library seeks to provide quality library service to the citizens of _____. The Trustees believe that the development of quality service will be aided by the selection of a qualified library director who will assist in the attainment of the library's goals.

In an effort to obtain community input in this selection, the Board of Trustees is appointing a Screening Committee comprised of representatives from the community, library staff and Trustees. _____, Chairperson of the Trustees, will chair the Screening Committee.

The Selection Committee is asked to

- study the job description prepared by the Board of Trustees
- review applications
- conduct preliminary interviews of those applicants who show the most potential for fulfilling the job description
- recommend three to five finalists for the Board of Trustees to interview for the final decision; deadline: March 30, 2008.

The Board of Trustees is to be apprised of the progress of the Screening Committee at its monthly meetings.

NOTE:

Another option for the Screening Committee is to have them only recommend candidates for interviewing by the Board of Trustees.

Of course, any provision of the draft is subject to your approval; for example, the Board may prefer a different number of finalists or a different Chair.

Sample Letters

Date

Name of Candidate

Mailing Address of Candidate

Dear Candidate:

Thank you for your interest in the recently advertised position of Director for the “X” Library. We are in the process of reviewing applications from all candidates prior to scheduling interviews.

Dear Candidate:

Thank you for submitting your application and resume for the position of Director of the “X” Library. I must inform you that you do not meet the minimum qualifications for this position, and you will not be interviewed for the position. We wish you the very best in your library career.

Dear Candidate:

I am writing to tell you that the position of Director of the “X” Library has been offered to, and accepted by, another candidate [option-name of candidate]. The Trustees of the Library appreciate your interest in our Library, and wish you the very best in your future endeavors.

Dear Candidate:

It gives me great pleasure to confirm our offer to you of the position of Director of the “X” Library. Starting salary for the position is \$00000.00, and your anticipated start date is [date.] Enclosed are various pre-employment forms which must be completed for the Town prior to your first day of work. Please return those, along with your letter accepting the position, no later than [date.] The staff and trustees are delighted that you will be joining the “X” Library team, and look forward to working with you in improving the quality of library services to the residents of our community. Please let me know if there is any information about the library or the community that you would like to receive prior to your first day of work.

Suggested Topics to be Covered During Interviews

During the interview, the Board or search committee has the occasion to learn firsthand about a candidate's interpersonal skills. It is also one of their best opportunities to consider the extent to which the applicant's abilities will enable him/her to successfully perform the responsibilities outlined in the job description.

The following are examples of the types of interview questions a Board may want to consider. It is not expected that they would all be chosen, that they would be stated exactly as written, or that they are all-inclusive. Only those most relevant to the library's situation and needs should be selected. It is probably not realistic to ask more than ten broad questions during an interview. All candidates should be asked the same questions; differing follow-up questions may be used to further explore each individual's experience or expertise. Avoid "yes/no" answerable questions. For final candidates, one good determinant of writing skills is to have them prepare a short piece on a case/particular topic.

Questions that pose a specific scenario can produce good results. For example, a Board can discover something about both the candidate's decision-making process and opinions on an issue of importance to the Board by asking about a hypothetical situation. Here are some examples:

The staff has been registering dissatisfaction recently with the level of training they receive about new technology and its use in the library; how would you approach the situation?

A building project has been discussed at the Board level for several years, without much progress; how would you activate the process?

Relations with the Town Finance Committee and Board of Selectman concerning the library's budget and specifically the salary level of employees need to be improved; what would you suggest as a plan of action?

And to make almost any question more effective, ask for specific examples or experiences that relate to the question.

Employment Experiences and Background

1. Describe your present and previous work experience and how it has prepared you for this job.
2. What do you feel you can contribute to our library?
3. Describe a particularly difficult situation you have had to deal with. How did you handle it?

Community Relations

1. What role should a library play in the life of its community?
2. What kinds of public relations activities (speak, writing, public programming) have you been involved with? In what ways were you successful or unsuccessful? Why?
3. What kind of public relations program would you envision for this library?

4. What experience have you had in working with municipal officials and groups, i.e. Boards of Selectmen, Mayors, Finance Committees, City/Town Accountants, City/Town Councils, Town Meetings?
5. Have you presented annual budgets to Town Meetings or City Councils? Have you spoken on behalf of library articles or issues at these meetings? Please explain.

Leadership Skills and Management Ability

1. Cite some examples of your leadership ability.
2. What is your management style?
3. What experience have you had in hiring people? Have you had to fire or discipline people you supervised? What have you learned from these experiences?
4. Cite some examples of your organizational ability.
5. What experiences have you had as a group leader? What experience have you had as a participant in groups?
6. Describe your experience with promoting staff training/development.
7. What is your experience with collective bargaining and unionized staff?
8. What do you see as the most difficult task in being a manager?

Planning and Evaluation

1. Have you had experience in evaluating services, developing long-range plans, undertaking a community analysis?
2. In what way does this library differ from the one you are with now? Why?
3. Describe some of the greatest problems and challenges facing public libraries today, particularly libraries of this size. What do you see as some of the answers?
4. What trends do you see developing which will affect libraries over the next few years? How do you think libraries like this one will be different five years from now?

Trustee Relations

1. In your view, what distinguishes an effective Board of Library Trustees from an ineffective one?
2. What kind of experience have you had with Boards of Library Trustees and other community boards?
3. If you were appointed Director, what kind of relationship would you strive to establish with the Library Board? What would you expect from the Board?

Library Service

1. Describe your experience in book selection and collection development. What size book budgets have you administered?
2. What is your philosophy of library service?
3. What do you think is the library's most important role?

Initiative, Resourcefulness and Self-Image

1. Would you describe yourself as a self-starter? Why?
2. How would you rate your ability to follow through and produce results without continual direction from someone else? Please cite examples.
3. What motivates you to put forth your greatest effort?
4. Generally speaking, what reaction do you think people have to you? Does it change after they get to know you?
5. What do you consider your most positive professional characteristics?
6. What areas need to be strengthened?
7. How do you compensate for your less developed characteristics?

Miscellaneous

1. What would you do during your first week on the job?
2. What questions do you have for us?
3. How does this position fit in with your overall career goals?

Examples of Inappropriate Questions Which Violate Equal Opportunity Laws

1. Where were you and your parents born?
2. So you have small children at home?
3. Why aren't you married?
4. What does your husband/wife do?
5. What will you do if one of your children has to stay home from school?
6. When do you plan on starting a family?
7. What social organizations do you belong to?
8. What church do you go to?

Interview Rating Sheet

Candidate: _____ Date: _____

Ratings: 1=weak; 2=somewhat weak; 3=fine; 4=somewhat strong; 5=strong

Weighting: The Committee should allocate a total of 100 percentage points to the seven categories, depending on the level of importance, i.e., if technology expertise is critical, 40 points may be allotted; if all categories are equally important, skip the weighting step.

Points: Multiply rating number by weight to get total points

	Rating	Weight	Points
Service & Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fitting library's roles to [our community] ▪ Customer/patron orientation ▪ Services for various populations ▪ Ideas for introducing a new community facility 			
Vision/Programs for Children			
Leadership/Management Within the Staff <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Creating service-oriented/high-morale staff ▪ Dealing with people problems/problem people ▪ Dealing with union issues 			
Technology			
Planning			
Budgeting/Finance			
Town Leadership			
Totals		100	

NOTES:

Sample Questions for Checking References of Library Director Applicants

1. What kind of initiative and resourcefulness does the candidate demonstrate? Examples?
2. Describe how the candidate relates to fellow workers; to the public.
3. Based on your knowledge of this candidate, what managerial and leadership skills does he/she possess that would affect his/her ability to perform well as a library director?
4. How effective has the candidate been in making budget presentations to municipal funding authorities?
5. Describe the working relationship between the candidate and your Board of Trustees.
6. Would you rehire this candidate?
7. Describe the achievements of the candidate during his/her employment.
8. Is there anything else we should know about this candidate to help us make a decision?

Include any other questions that will assist you in answering questions that were not completely covered in the interview. You may find that some places of employment will only verify the time of employment of a candidate and will not answer specific questions.

Example of Employment Contract for Library Director

This agreement between the (Name of the Library) and (Name of Person) appointed to the position of Library Director is made in accordance with the following provisions:

1. **APPOINTMENT.** Appointment to this position is made by the Board of Trustees of the (Name of the Library.) Assumption of duties shall begin (Date.)
2. **RESPONSIBILITIES.** The Director shall be responsible for the management and operation of the Library in accordance with policies established by the Board of Trustees. Duties shall be as specified in the job description of Library Director, which shall be considered a part of this contract. A copy of the job description is attached to this contract.
3. **ACCOUNTABILITY.** This position is directly accountable to the Board which shall provide direction as necessary and shall conduct an annual performance evaluation.
4. **PROBATIONARY PERIOD.** The first six months of employment shall constitute a learning period. During this period, performance of duties and responsibilities shall be closely monitored with guidance provided as necessary to address questions, make corrections, and clarify responsibilities.

An oral review of performance shall be conducted by the Board Chair or other designated members at the completion of the first, second, and fourth month. Performance goals shall be established in writing prior to commencement of work and shall be used as the basis for a formal evaluation at the end of the six-month period. The Library's performance appraisal form shall be used for this evaluation process.

During the learning period, employment may be terminated by either party after a one-month notice.

5. **TENURE.** Appointment to this position shall remain in effect as long as the Library Director is able to perform the duties and responsibilities contained in the attached job description (which may be revised from time to time in response to changing Library needs and conditions) and in this agreement, and providing that annual performance reviews are satisfactory.

In the event that the Library Director wishes to terminate employment a 30 day notice shall be given to the Board of Trustees.

In the event that the Board of Trustees wishes to consider termination of employment, the following procedures shall be followed:

- 5.1 The Board shall schedule a hearing, to be conducted by its Chairperson, at which reasons for termination will be presented and the employee's response to them will be considered.
- 5.2 At least 20 working days before the hearing date, the Board shall give written notice of the hearing to the Library Director. The notice shall include the time and place of the hearing, the person who will conduct it, and the reasons for which termination of employment is being considered.
- 5.3 The Library Director may attend the hearing, with or without counsel, to hear and cross-examine all witnesses against the Library Director and to present witnesses in defense.

- 5.4 The Board shall hold an open hearing if the Library Director requests that it be open.
- 5.5 After conducting the hearing, the Board shall prepare a written statement of its decision and of facts presented at the hearing upon which this decision is based.
- 5.6 Within five working days after the hearing, the Library Director shall be provided with a copy of the Board's written statement.
- 5.7 If the Board's decision calls for termination of employment, termination shall not take effect in fewer than 40 working days from the hearing date.
6. MATERIALS AND FACILITIES USE POLICIES. The Board has adopted a written policy, which is hereby made a part of this contract, on selection of library materials and on use of materials and facilities. This policy is in accord with intellectual freedom standards adopted by the American Library Association.
7. HOURS OF WORK. The normal workweek for the Director shall consist of (Number of Hours), scheduled as follows: (Specify the weekly work schedule, if appropriate.)

(OPTIONAL – It is recognized that performance of duties will sometimes require hours different from, and/or in addition to, the normal work schedule. Whenever additional time is earned in this way, the library director will be allowed to take compensatory time off as (he or she) deems appropriate during normal work hours.

8. SALARY. Salary for this position shall be (Amount) per (hour, week, month, or year) for the period (date) to (date.) Salary increases granted after this period will be determined annually, based on such considerations as cost of living, performance, and length of service.

(NOTE: IF SALARY IS SET AND CONTROLLED BY THE MUNICIPALITY AND/OR BY A PERSONNEL CLASIFICACION AND PAY PLAN WHICH APPLIES TO LIBRARY PERSONNEL, THE SECOND PARAGRAPH OF THE STATEMENT MIGHT READ: "Salary increases granted after this period shall be as provided for by (name of municipality or the personnel classification and pay plan) in accordance with the Classification and Pay Plans/Personnel By-Laws of the municipality.")

9. PERFORMANCE REVIEW. Performance of duties and responsibilities shall be reviewed each year during the month of (indicate month) by the Board of Library Trustees. Performance shall be evaluated on the basis of fulfilling duties and responsibilities contained in the Director's job description, contribution to achievement of overall goals of the Library, and progress in meeting specific performance goals previously established for the review period. The Library's performance review form shall be used for the review and a copy shall be filed in the Director's personnel file.

In addition to the annual review, the Board, or designated representatives, shall meet with the library director approximately six months after the start of the review period to discuss performance and address issues and questions which may have developed since the last performance review meeting. This meeting is not a formal performance review, and will not lead to completion of the performance review form. The purpose of this interim meeting is to ensure that both parties are in close communication so that misunderstandings do not develop and problems are addressed before they become serious.

In the event that potentially serious performance problems are identified during the year, additional meetings may be scheduled in order to resolve them. These meetings will be formal meetings of the Board. If these prove unsuccessful and the problem(s) continue, the Library may revise the performance review form in effect for the period by developing new performance goals designed to address the problem(s).

10. VACATION. The Director shall receive (amount of vacation time) paid vacation time annually. Any unused vacation time remaining at the end of the calendar year may be accrued into the next year, but must be taken before the end of the year.

(NOTE: IF VACATION TIME IS DETERMINED BY THE MUNICIPALITY OR IS ALREADY DEFINED IN POLICIES ADOPTED BY THE BOARD, THE STATEMENT MIGHT READ AS FOLLOWS: "The Director shall receive an annual paid vacation as provided for in (Indicate name of policy and/or name of municipality) in accordance with the Classification and Pay Plans/Personnel By-Laws of the municipality.")

11. RETIREMENT. The Director shall participate in (Specify name of retirement plan) provided by the (Indicate name of the town or city-if Library has a separate retirement plan, indicate its name.)
12. MEDICAL INSURANCE. Medical insurance coverage is available to the Director and his/her family through (INDICATE NAME OF PLAN(S)). Payment of premiums shall be shared as follows: (INDICATE PERCENTAGE PAID BY EMPLOYER AND BY EMPLOYEE OR OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.)
13. SOCIAL SECURITY INSURANCE. The library director shall be a member of the Social Security System and shall make contributions as required by law.
14. SICK LEAVE. The Director shall receive 15 (if different, specify) days sick leave annually, accumulative to a maximum of 120 (if different, specify) days.
15. PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES. Time with pay shall be given to the library director to allow participation in appropriate library-related meetings, conferences, and programs. Funds will be budgeted each year to cover the Director's expenses in attending such events. It is understood that the funds available may not cover the full cost of attending a given program, and that, in some cases, no funds may be available.

The Director shall also be reimbursed at the rate of {current rate} cents per mile for use of his/her personal automobile on library-related business.

16. INVALIDITY. All terms of this contract which happen to conflict with any constitution or state in effect in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts or federal laws, are hereby amended to conform to such law. If any paragraph, part of, or rider to this contract is invalid, it shall not affect the remainder of the contract, but said remainder shall be binding and effective against all parties.
17. ENTIRE AGREEMENT. This contract embodies the whole agreement between the Board and Director and there are no inducements, promises, terms, conditions, or obligations made or entered into by either party other than those contained herein. The contract may be amended by a writing signed by the Director and Board and no other mode of amendment shall be effective.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have here unto signed, dated, and sealed this contract and a duplicate thereof this ____ day of __ in the year ____.

BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES

LIBRARY DIRECTOR

(Signature)

(Signature)

(Date)

(Date)

Sample Library Director Evaluation

The XXX Library Board of Trustees will conduct a formal, written evaluation of the Library Director at the end of each fiscal year.

Purposes of the Performance Evaluation

- To provide the director with clear understanding of the board's expectations.
- To ensure the director and the board are aware of how well the expectations are being met.
- To serve as a formal vehicle of primary communication between the board and director.
- To identify the board's actual concerns so that appropriate action can be taken. To demonstrate sound management practices and accountability to municipal officials and the community.

Expectations and Evaluation

Directors are held accountable to many varied and sometimes conflicting constituencies. The board and the director must recognize these groups and acknowledge the relationship with each one:

- The general public
- Elected officials and the appointed governing officer who supervises other municipal departments
- The library staff members who have diverse personal expectations for their director
- Public pressure groups who exert pressure on the director to respond to their concerns
- Friends of the Library groups
- Individual members of the board of trustees who have personal priorities for the library and the director.

Good communication, public relations, a written plan and clear policies will all help the board and director to deal with any conflicting expectations. The evaluation method and process can be designed to include input from all these groups, but the final responsibility rests with the board.

Definition of Rating Terms:

5: Outstanding: The Director's performance is exceptional in comparison to expectations.

4: Highly Effective: The Director always meets and frequently exceeds performance expectations.

3: Effective: The Director consistently meets performance expectations and performs in a professional and competent manner.

2: Needs Improvement: The Director meets only minimally acceptable levels of performance; the Director requires extra direction from the Library Trustees.

1: Unacceptable/Needs Substantial Improvement: The Director does not meet performance expectations, even at a minimally acceptable level; the Director requires significant extra direction and/or constant supervision from the Library Trustees. Need for immediate and significant improvement.

0: N/A: Not applicable to this situation.

Please rate the Library Director in the following areas using the above scale 5 (highest) to 1 (lowest) or N/A (Not Applicable) where appropriate:

1. Preparing and Managing the Budget

___ Necessary work is completed in a timely manner prior to presentation to the Board.

___ The budget covers all necessary expenses.

___ Funds are allocated or reserved for unanticipated contingencies.

___ Funds are effectively allocated.

___ Mid-course corrections are minimized.

___ ARIS (August) and State Aid (October) reports are accurate and complete and submitted to the MBLC in a timely manner.

___ Other funding sources are explored and applied for as appropriate.

Comments:

Managing the Staff

___ Positive management/staff relations are maintained.

___ Fair and equitable policies are proposed for board adoption and then fairly administered.

___ When grievances are filed they are justified.

Comments:

3. Professional Awareness

___ Innovative methods of service delivery and technical processes are studied thoroughly.

___ Innovations are implemented only after they fit the needs of the institution and are proven to be cost effective.

___ The director maintains an adequate knowledge of current library science practices.

___ Staff are encouraged to maintain an awareness of technological advances in the profession.

Comments:

4. Collection development

___ Collection development policy is up-to-date.

___ Selection and weeding policies are systematically implemented.

___ Director determines user needs/wants and translates these into appropriate acquisitions and services.

___ Selection criteria have been established to enable the library to react systematically to changes in the budget.

___ The collection is current and reflects present community needs and interests.

Comments:

5. Implementation of Board Decisions

___ Board decisions are implemented on a timely basis.

___ Director displays initiative.

___ Director is objective in making the necessary decisions.

___ Director is consistent in decisions that affect the staff and/or public.

___ Director fully and enthusiastically supports board decisions.

___ Director sets an example for the staff through professional conduct, high principles, and a business-like approach.

Comments:

6. Use of the Library

___ Effectively communicates library services to the public.

___ A proper and realistic balance is maintained between promotion of services and budget constraints.

___ Circulation trends and in-house use are adequately analyzed.

___ Information about new services are effectively communicated to the public.

Comments:

7. Development of Staff

___ Potential managers are identified, encouraged to develop and assisted in their pursuit of career goals.

___ Internal candidates for promotion are competitive with outside candidates for management positions.

___ Director adequately justifies the need for staff development funds, actively campaigns for such funds, and adequately account for the use of such funds.

___ Cross-training is utilized to provide adequate service to the public.

Comments:

8. Utilization of Staff

___ Staff are aware of the separation of professional and clerical tasks and responsibilities.

___ Peak service hours have been identified and staff deployed accordingly.

___ Functions are analyzed periodically with the objective of combining, eliminating and/or creating new positions.

Comments:

9. Community Development

___ Director is active in the community.

___ The Director is "visible" to large segments of the population.

___ The Director is available for speaking engagements in the community

Comments:

10. Activity in Professional Organizations

___ Director participates and holds office in professional organizations as appropriate.

Comments:

11. Policy Recommendations to Board

___ Adequate staff research is completed prior to presentation to the board.

___ Policy recommendations are necessary and appropriate to the efficient operation of the library.

___ Trustees are informed of new developments and important news reported in library correspondence and literature to provide them with the necessary background to make informed policy decisions.

Comments:

12. Friends of The Library

___ Director actively promotes the maintenance of a Friends group.

___ Director and staff provide adequate support to the Friends organization.

___ Director delineates and/or helps define the role of the Friends group.

___ Friends group has adequate explanation of its role in relationship to the role of the board.

Comments:

13. Maintenance and Construction of Physical Plants

___ Buildings and grounds are adequately maintained within the imposed budgetary constraints.

___ Director has an ongoing program that provides adequate information on the need for new and/or remodeled facilities.

___ New and/or remodeled facilities are functionally appropriate and aesthetically pleasing.

___ New and/or remodeled facilities are constructed within budget allocations.

Comments:

14. Establishing Priorities

- ___ Director's recommended priorities are in concert with the library's plan as defined by the board.
- ___ Priorities appropriately reflect community needs.
- ___ Priorities reflect advanced planning.
- ___ Director's accomplishments reflect and relate to the short and long range plans.
- ___ Plans are updated on a continuous basis to reflect changing circumstances.
- ___ Director provides adequate information to the board on the implementation and revision of short and long term planning.

Comments:

15. Staff Selection

- ___ Staff selection is accomplished at appropriate supervisory levels and with adequate use of staff resources.
- ___ Adequate emphasis is placed on Equal Opportunity Employment/Affirmative Action.
- ___ Selection process is designed to insure the selection of the best person for the job.

Comments: