

# A Comparison of Responsibilities:

**Local Library Board of Trustees, Local Library Director, Regional Library,  
and Friends of the Library**

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These work sheets were originally created by a committee of Tennessee Regional Library System Directors:

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Lynette Sloan, Blue Grass Region; and Janet Smith, Highland Rim Region. Tennessee State Library & Archives, 1994.

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**Tennessee State Library and Archives**  
Secretary of State Tre Hargett

OVERVIEW	TRUSTEE	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	REGIONAL LIBRARY	FRIENDS
	<p>Library boards have been created by law to act as the governing body of the library [TCA 10-3-101,103,104]. Thus library trustees are public officials, and the powers delegated to library boards are a public trust.</p> <p>Duties and responsibilities include legal responsibilities as established by statute and the establishment of policies governing the day to day operation of the library.</p> <p>Although the board and library director must work closely together in developing a library program, their obligations and responsibilities are entirely different.</p> <p>In <i>Trustees as Servants</i>, Robert Greenleaf outlined his concept of the role of trustees: to stand outside the active program of the institution, delegating to a director the <i>administrative</i> responsibilities.</p>	<p>The library director is responsible to the library board for implementing the board-adopted policies and long-range plans for the development of the library program.</p> <p>The library director recommends needed policies for board action; acts as a technical advisor to the board; hire and manage all staff and suggests and implements plans for extending library services.</p> <p>Each director is a servant of the community as well. Administration is a function designed by trustees to be carried out by a paid director who is not a trustee. Administrators are responsible for all actions necessary to reach the goals set by the trustees.</p>	<p>The relationship between county library, regional library and state library, supported by a service agreement, is one of cooperation, directed to the improvement of library service.</p> <p>The regional library center staff provides professional and technical assistance to boards and staff, generally in the form of advice or strong recommendation.</p> <p>Provide hands on assistance whenever appropriate and requested.</p>	<p>Friends of the Library is a group of individuals who value public library services to the community and are willing to volunteer their time, talents, and efforts to promote and support the library's goals and objectives in whatever way will be helpful.</p> <p>Library Friends are organized to help support the work of the library, not to engage in the work and responsibilities of the library board members or the library staff.</p> <p>Friends of the Library cooperate with both, but do not interfere with either. Generally the Friends areas of focus are: fundraising, advocacy, and volunteer work.</p>

<b>PLANNING</b>	<b>TRUSTEE</b>	<b>LIBRARY DIRECTOR</b>	<b>REGIONAL LIBRARY</b>	<b>FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY</b>
	Through study and observation, analyze the community needs. Determine purpose of the library and secure adequate funds to carry out its programs.	Assist the library board in assessing community needs and discuss with them the selection of library roles to serve those needs.	Provide information and training in techniques of needs assessments. Provide demographic and comparative information which helps to identify the population served.	
	Develop and adopt a Long-Range Program (including objectives addressing the use of technology for the library; review and revise it as necessary to meet changing needs).	Provide help in writing the draft long range plan following the board adopted roles, goals, objectives, and write plans for board review and adoption. Make regular progress reports to the board and regional library.	Provide information and training in the techniques of writing planning documents. Review plans and make recommendations to the library director and board as needed.	Keep informed of the library's plans, progress, and problems; be willing to assist in carrying out objectives and implementing community analysis surveys and questionnaires.
	Inform funding bodies and Friends regarding current local, state, and federal library issues and trends.	Educate board and Friends regarding current local, state, and federal library issues and trends.	Provide training to library directors and trustees concerning current or forthcoming state and federal library issues and trends.	Serve as advocates for local, state, and national library issues; represent the library program to legislators.

<b>POLICY</b>	<b>TRUSTEE</b>	<b>LIBRARY DIRECTOR</b>	<b>REGIONAL LIBRARY</b>	<b>FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY</b>
	Know library laws and support legislation which improves the quality of library service.	Know library laws and support legislation which improves the quality of library service.	Keep library board and staff informed of changes in library laws and proposed legislation that would affect the quality of library service.	Adopt constitution and bylaws that include clear statements of the supportive role of the Friends Group.
	Work with county and city officials to ensure that they understand the value of the library and support the services it provides.	Provide the board with all needed library data for reports to local government officials and assist the board in explaining library services and programs to governing bodies.	Assist the library board and staff with the provision of information and reports to local and state government.  Act as an advocate for the library at request of the library board.	
	Reports regularly to governing	Collect and maintain statistical data	Collect and maintain statistical	

	bodies and to regional board representatives.	and information for reporting to library board and regional library.	data and information for reporting to local boards, local governments, the regional board, and the State Library and Archives.	
<b>POLICY, Continued</b>	Attend all board meetings and committee meetings to which assigned. Carry out special assignments promptly. Follow through securing appropriate board action.	Attend board meetings.	Attend board meetings.	Arrange to have a representative from the Friends group attend board meetings to promote mutual understanding and aid in cooperation.
	Develop and adopt written policies for personnel, collection development, and library operations.  Adopt bylaws for board procedures. Subscribe to the <i>Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees</i> and develop a local board Code of Ethics.	Develop procedures to implement policies adopted by the board, and advise board when additional policies are needed.  Subscribe to the <i>Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees</i> , the local board Code of Ethics, and the <i>Statement of Professional Ethics</i> .	Advise the board of policies needed and supply samples of policies from other boards.  Provide information about the <i>Ethics Statement for Public Library Trustees</i> as well as examples of local board Code of Ethics.	Support the policies of the library as adopted by the library board; offer assistance in communicating policies to citizens of the community.  Conduct all activities ethically.
	Establish, support and participate in a planned marketing and public relations program.  Keep the general public informed about library services and programs.	Participate in the planning and implementation of a marketing and public relations program. The library director actively promotes the library program at every opportunity.	Provide training and resources for marketing and promoting the library; makes promotional presentations at the request of the local board or library director.	Serve as additional "connecting link" in interpreting the library and community to each other; conduct fundraising and book events endorsed by the library director and board.
	Attend trustee workshops and professional meetings.	Encourage trustees to attend workshops and professional meetings.	Encourage trustees to attend workshops and professional meetings.	
	Encourage new trustees to attend trustee orientations and complete the Tennessee Trustee Certification program.	Develop a local library orientation program for new members.	Plan and execute trustee workshops and orientation for new trustees.  Encourage new trustee attendance at local, regional and state conferences and workshops.	

<b>FINANCE</b>	<b>TRUSTEE</b>	<b>LIBRARY DIRECTOR</b>	<b>REGIONAL LIBRARY</b>	<b>FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY</b>
	<p>Annually work with the library director in the preparation of a written budget with adequate justification for each element.</p> <p>Work with county/city officials to ensure that the budget is prepared in the proper format.</p>	<p>Annually work with the board in the preparation of a written budget request with justifications for each element.</p> <p>Work with county/city officials to ensure that the budget is prepared in the proper format.</p>	<p>Provide information and examples of written budgets with adequate justification.</p> <p>Assist the board in the preparation of written budget requests as requested by the board.</p>	<p>Conduct fund-raising that complements the library's mission and provides funding for special library projects to meet needs as expressed by the library director and/or board.</p>
	<p>Present the prepared budget to the appropriate public officials and to the general public. Explain and defend it.</p> <p>Attend budget hearings with library director.</p>	<p>Attend budget hearings with the board chair and/or treasurer.</p>	<p>Attend budget hearings as requested by the board.</p>	<p>At the request of the library director, use individual and collective influence to assist the library board and director in getting desired financial support from local, state, and national sources.</p>
	<p>If needed, design funding formula to distribute county/city funds to libraries and/or branches.</p>	<p>If needed, monitor and report to board concerning expenditure of distributed funds to branch libraries.</p>	<p>Provide information about and examples of funding distribution formulas when needed.</p>	<p>Contribute funds for books, training, materials, services, equipment, etc. to supplement what cannot be provided by the budget with regard to the expressed needs given to them by the library director and/or board.</p>
	<p>Request financial report from funding body if needed, and review at each library board meeting. Monitor line items to determine how expenditure by line item compares to line item budget.</p>	<p>Present to the board at each regular meeting financial reports which include line item expenditures, fund balances, and funds received with source.</p>	<p>Review financial reports and procedures. Provide the board with suggestions for strengthening their accountability image with the governing bodies.</p>	
	<p>Review procedures and records for accuracy and completeness. Arrange for an annual audit.</p>	<p>Maintain financial records in accordance with requirements of state statutes and accepted accounting procedures. Assemble all documents for an annual audit.</p>	<p>Assist the library director in proper financial practices and in developing reporting formats and techniques.</p>	

	Present an annual report to officials and community organizations.	Prepare an annual report of all receipts, expenditures and fund balances for the board, local government, regional library center, and state library.	Monitor annual financial reporting of local income and expenditures; confirm compliance with Maintenance of Effort (MOE) requirements.	
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PERSONNEL	TRUSTEE	LIBRARY DIRECTOR	REGIONAL LIBRARY	FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY
	Observe all local, state and federal laws that relate to current employment practices. Be aware of county/city personnel policies as they relate to the library.	Maintain documents and notices of changes in laws applicable to employment practices. Furnish the board with the latest employment information regarding changes in local, state, and federal law.	Keep the board informed of changes in employment laws and practices.	
	Establish a well-defined employment procedure to be followed for all positions. Be sure that all local, state, and federal laws are met regarding advertising of positions and maintenance of personnel records.	Follow the board's adopted employment procedure for filling staff vacancies. Advise the board when additional positions are needed to improve the delivery of information to the public.	Provide information about employment/ interview techniques. Assist in the search/interview process if requested to do so.	
	Establish job descriptions, salary scales, benefits package, and personnel policies; all should be based upon jobs of a comparable nature in other government departments.	Follow the board adopted job descriptions, salary scales and personnel policies and notify each staff member as changes are made which are pertinent to their position. Advise the board of needed policy changes and/or additional policies.	Provide comparative information regarding job descriptions, pay scales, benefits available, and personnel policies.	
	Employ a competent qualified library director following a well-defined search plan. Evaluate the performance of the library director annually.	Utilize the performance review to define and establish personal performance goals and/or innovative library programs.	Provide information for the development of a search plan and suggest performance evaluation tools and techniques.	
	Monitor the administration of the library for effective use of personnel, quality of programs, and materials.	Organize and administer the daily operation of the library under the direction and supervision of the library board.	Provide information and training in the methods of organizing and administering the daily operation of public libraries.	Provide reliable volunteer help for projects when requested by library director.
	Require staff to attend professional development	Attend in-service training sessions, continuing education opportunities	Provide in-service training sessions on a regular basis, and	

	opportunities through attendance at regional in-services and other continuing education events. Budget funds for travel, substitute staff and staff time for attendance at meetings.	and professional conferences and meetings. Apply appropriate training information and techniques to library program and/or services.	alert library staff to outside continuing education opportunities.	
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<b>COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>TRUSTEE</b>	<b>LIBRARY DIRECTOR</b>	<b>REGIONAL LIBRARY</b>	<b>FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY</b>
	Establish a collection policy and review it annually. Endorse the <i>Library Bill of Rights</i> , the <i>Freedom to Read Statement</i> , and the <i>Freedom to View Statement</i> , written by the American Library Association.	Select materials in accordance with the collection development policy and the selection plan. Ensure that all selection practices are in accordance with the principles of the <i>Library Bill of Rights</i> , the <i>Freedom to Read Statement</i> and the <i>Freedom to View Statement</i> .	Provide technical information and assistance in developing collection management plans. Provide copies of the <i>Library Bill of Rights</i> , the <i>Freedom to Read Statement</i> , and the <i>Freedom to View Statement</i> .	
	In addition to a selection policy, establish a de-selection policy that includes disposal procedures. Recognize the fact that materials do wear out and become obsolete (even memorials). Encourage regular weeding (thinning) of the collection in line with state standards.	Maintain a regular schedule of removing materials, including memorial books, which are in poor physical condition, contain outdated information, and/or exceeded their period of demand. Dispose of materials by board-approved procedures.	Provide training and technical assistance in the methods of de-selecting library materials. Recommend methods for disposal of library materials.	
	Establish a procedure to review citizen complaints about materials.	Follow board procedure for addressing citizen complaints about materials.	Provide information on censorship and methods of handling citizen complaints about materials.	
	Determine subdivision of regional "Local Library Materials Allocation" when administering multiple facilities.	Adhere to the policies established by the regional board or State Library in selecting materials from the "Local Library Materials Allocation".	Under the direction of the State Library, determine the practices to be followed in the expenditure of regional funds for the "Local Library Materials Allocation" selections.	

	Monitor the execution of a regular inventory of the materials collection.	Maintain a regular schedule for inventory of the collection; monitor "high risk" areas of the collection between inventories.	Provide guidance in the regular inventory and evaluation of the collection, including an evaluation of selection practices being followed.	
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<b>PROGRAMS AND SERVICES</b>	<b>TRUSTEE</b>	<b>LIBRARY DIRECTOR</b>	<b>REGIONAL LIBRARY</b>	<b>FRIENDS OF THE LIBRARY</b>
	Encourage the staff to apply for grant funds to demonstrate and/or establish the need for a service/program by a specific group.	Prepare written grants in specific areas to improve the quality of materials and services to specific segments of the population or needs of the library.	Provide assistance in writing grants for special services/programs.	
	Encourage the establishment of a Friends of the Library group.	Encourage the establishment of a Friends of the Library group; communicate regularly with Friends group about library needs and challenges.	Provide information concerning the establishment of a Friends of the Library group.	Guard against infringement of trustees' or director's role in connection with the operation of the library. Assist in ways compatible within the scope of Friends role and as requested by the director or library board.
	Know about the services of the State Library and Archives, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and the Library Service for the Hearing Impaired.	Use the services and programs as offered by the State Library and Archives, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and the Library Service for the Hearing Impaired.	Promote the services of the State Library and Archives, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and the Library Service for the Hearing Impaired.	
	Know about services of the Tennessee Regional Library System.	Use the services and programs as offered by the Tennessee Regional Library System.	Continually provide information concerning all regional services.	
	Explore all possible methods for delivery of innovative library services and programs.	Keep the board informed about current trends in library services and explore ways of implementing new services.	Recommend programs and services to library director and board.	Be alert to recognize ways the Friends could be helpful and receptive to suggestions from the director and/or board. Be enthusiastic and



				resourceful in carrying out what ever projects are undertaken and /or projects proposed by the director or library board.
	Regularly communicate with the Friends group, regional library and the state library concerning local public library needs and changes in service.	Regularly communicate with the library board, Friends group, regional library and state library concerning public library needs and changes in service.	Regularly communicate with local library director and library board concerning issues related to public library service.	Make continuous effort to maintain good communication with library board and director.
	Coordinate and implement an ongoing marketing, outreach, and public relations program, including a Community Analysis and identification of community groups and individuals to be visited.	Develop an active marketing, outreach and public relations program for the library, including regular updates of the Community Scan and identification of community groups and individuals to be visited.	Provide training and materials about the development of library marketing, outreach, and public relations program.	Offer suggestions for the library's marketing and public relations program. Promote the library to the public, following the direction of the library's marketing plan.