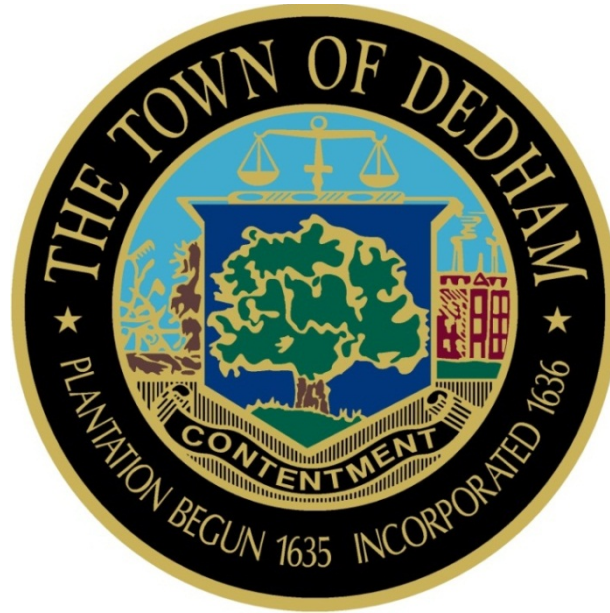


Town of Dedham Select Board



Discussion re: Board of Library Trustees Appointments

What Governs the Board of Library Trustees?

State Law

Part I	Administration of the Government
Title XII	Education
Chapter 78	Libraries
Sections 11	Board of trustees; powers and duties

Section 11: Board of trustees; powers and duties

The board shall have the custody and management of the library and reading room and of all property owned by the town relating thereto.

[Additional language online here.](#)

What Governs the Board of Library Trustees?

Town Charter

SECTION 3-7

Composition, Term of Office
Powers and Duties

Town Bylaws

SECTION 61

Board of Trustees to have custody of the Library.
Regular and special meetings.
Trustees to organize and appoint Library Director.
Financial records, invest library funds and approve expenditures.
Treasurer-Collector to have custody of library funds.
Financial transactions to be done by Treasurer-Collector
Staffing
Trustees to submit annual report.

What is a Board of Library Trustees?

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

- The board as a whole should represent a broad spectrum of the community. A board consisting of diverse viewpoints assures that the library will serve the total community. Certain competencies necessary to accomplish the board's goals should, ideally, be present in the total composition of the board. Issues and decisions involved in the administration of the modern public library are varied and complex.
- Successful trusteeship creates a working relationship with the community, library staff and fellow trustees. Trustees take their responsibilities as public officials beyond the library board room. An effective trustee is one who participates intelligently in the entire political process: understanding municipal finance, local budgetary pressures, personnel concerns, and the administrative practices of the municipality as a whole. A library board which recognizes that the library is not an island, but part of a larger municipal structure, will build stronger partnerships within the community it serves.

What is a Board of Library Trustees?

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

- The board fulfills ethical, legal and fiduciary responsibilities by:
 - Employing a qualified library director and understanding the director's roles and responsibilities
 - Setting service-oriented library policies which uphold the principles of equal access to information and the free exchange of ideas
 - Guiding the management and maintenance of library facilities and assets and expending financial resources judiciously
 - Working to secure an appropriate funding level for facilities, technology, hours of operation, collections and staff
 - Knowing and observing applicable municipal, state and federal laws and regulations
 - Working with the community to identify information needs and to develop and implement a written plan for the maintenance and improvement of library services
 - Seeking and applying resources and training which expand trustee skills.

Roles & Responsibilities

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

WHO DOES WHAT?

Cooperation is the key! Understanding the different responsibilities of the trustee board and the library director is essential to avoid confusion and potential problems. The board and the director should review this list together.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Works closely with municipal officials.
- Responsible for custody and management of the library (unless otherwise provided by municipal charter or special legislation).

Library Director:

- Prepares all necessary reports.

Board and Director Together:

- Seek municipal legal counsel when needed.
- Follow all local, state, and federal laws and regulations which affect public libraries.

Roles & Responsibilities

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

GOVERNANCE AND POLICY MAKING RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Hires and evaluates the director unless otherwise dictated by state or local laws.
- Adopts library policies and plans, and board bylaws and procedures.
- Approves and supports budget.
- Reviews reports; stays informed; represents the community.
- Notifies appropriate authorities of board vacancies.

Library Director:

- Is responsible for administration of library services, personnel and facilities.
- Prepares reports and other relevant documents.
- Keeps trustees informed of progress and problems.
- Researches and recommends policies.
- Provides assistance and direction to the board.
- Administers policies; interprets policies to staff and public.

Board and Director Together:

- Develop and review priorities for the library.

Roles & Responsibilities

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Reviews director's budget request; makes recommendations and officially adopts budget.
- Actively supports and advocates for budget.
- Reports annually to municipal officials on trustee controlled funds.
- Keeps informed of the financial status, funding sources, and needs of the library.

Library Director:

- Prepares and develops the budget.
- Maintains complete and accurate records of finances and inventory.
- Keeps board apprised of library's financial situation.

Board and Director Together:

- Present and defend budget requests to municipal funding authorities.
- Attend all budget hearings.
- Seek additional sources of funding (grants, private, other).

Roles & Responsibilities

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

STRATEGIC PLANNING RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

-Approves strategic plan.

Library Director:

-Implements goals and objectives of approved plan.

Board and Director Together:

-Actively participate in strategic planning.

-Involve community in the planning process.

-Conduct community analysis and survey of library services.

-Review and evaluate the plan.

Roles & Responsibilities

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

HUMAN RESOURCES RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Hires and evaluates director unless otherwise dictated by state or local laws.
- Determines and advocates for optimal salary and benefits for employees.
- Adheres to personnel policies.
- Conducts annual review of board performance.

Library Director:

- Hires, supervises and evaluates staff.
- Recommends optimal salary and working conditions.

Board and Director Together:

- Observe all local, state, and federal laws that relate to current employment practices.
- Orient new trustees.

Roles & Responsibilities

[From the MA Board of Library Commissioners Library Trustees Handbook](#)

CONTINUING EDUCATION RESPONSIBILITIES

Trustee Board:

- Creates and adopts a policy that demonstrates a commitment to the importance of continuing educations for all staff and trustees.

Library Director:

- Informs board and staff of continuing education needs and opportunities.

Board and Director Together:

- Provide and encourage ongoing learning opportunities for staff and trustees.
- Encourage and financially support membership and active participation in professional organizations.

MLBC Position Description for Public Library Trustee

Job Title: Library Board Member

Accountable To: Members of the community, local governing body, and others served by the library

Responsibilities: Attends and participates in all board meetings

Works with other board members to:

- oversee the library
- hire and evaluate the library director
- establish policy and strategic plans
- determine the final budget
- conduct public relations and advocacy

Duties:

Reads board meeting minutes and other materials sent out before the board meeting

Becomes informed about all phases of library operation

Knows the programs and services the library offers

Serves on committees as assigned by board chair

Participates in the library's planning process, reviews and revises plan annually

Lends expertise and leadership to the board for the good of the library

Actively participates in activities and workshops offered on the local, state and national levels

Helps to secure adequate municipal funding for the library

Participates in fundraising activities

Visits the library often

Is aware of the services offered by the MBLC and MLS

Reports regularly to municipal officials and to the community

Knows laws that affect the library

Understands local government structure and stays informed of changes in municipal policies that may affect the library

Qualifications:

Resident of the city or town in which they serve

Commitment to and appreciation of the library, and a desire to provide the best possible library service for the community