

GOVERNANCE

Overview

Public libraries in Colorado may be established by a municipal or county government or as a library district under Colorado Library Law. The Library Governing Authority adopts and provides oversight of budgets; supervises Library Directors; adopts policy, and sets direction. This can be the Library District Governing Board, City Council or County Commissioners.

Colorado recognizes two types of library boards, Governing or Advisory. The responsibilities of the Library Governing Board are clearly defined in Library Law. The Library Advisory Board gets direction from the Library Governing Authority (county or municipal authorities) advocates for the library and represents the community by advising the Library Director and the Library Governing Authority.

The Library Governing Authority provides a facility or facilities, and a range of services that can be used with confidence by all residents. Resources and services are provided without partisan political belief or censorship. The Library Advisory Board's responsibilities will vary from city to city and county to county; however, both Library Governing and Advisory Boards have the responsibility to advocate for the library, to identify community priorities, to follow state and national laws applicable to libraries, and to plan for the future of the library. In order to stay current and informed, both the Library Director and the Library Governing or Advisory Board should participate in activities sponsored by state and national library organizations.

The Library Governing Authority, Library Director, and staff apply practical and acceptable management practices and standards to the daily operations of the library. These practices are clearly defined in a set of policies that are made available to the public. Hiring and evaluating a Library Director is one of the Library Governing Authority's most important duties. A guide to helping with this task can be found in the resources following the checklist of this standard. To prevent all-too-common conflicts resulting from the confusion between governing and management, Library Governing Boards should have a policy stating that human resource administration including hiring, supervision, evaluation and termination of all library staff has been delegated to the Library Director.

The Library Director is responsible for the creation and updating of a procedures manual to carry out all policies. The Library Director manages the library on a daily basis by planning, organizing and directing services that address all people in the community. The Library Director measures and evaluates the effectiveness of library services in relation to the changing needs of the community. Through continuous communication among themselves and with the community, the Library Governing Authority and Director seek not only to serve library users well, but also to constantly improve library services.

Governance Checklist

- 1. Library has been established in accordance with state and local codes and ordinances, in conformance with Colorado Library Law CRS 24-90-105.
- 2. Library is in compliance with federal and state laws that affect library operations, including the American with Disabilities Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, and the Colorado Confidentiality Law.
- 3. A map of the current service area population is made available to the Colorado State Library.
- 4. Maintain a written plan of emergency procedures and risk management plan.
- 5. Library Governing Authority assures that all residents of the library service area have access to tax-supported public library services.
- 6. Library Governing Authority is ultimately responsible for the library and its budget.
- 7. Maintain insurance covering property and liability, including volunteer liability covering errors and omissions.
- 8. Library has a Governing or Advisory Board with appointments and terms in compliance with state statute. Membership reflects the demographics of the population served by the library.
- 9. The Library Governing Authority actively recruits qualified candidates for Library Board openings.
- 10. Library Governing Boards have written bylaws that outline its purpose and its operational procedures and address conflict-of-interest issues. The bylaws are reviewed at least every three years and a current copy is sent to the Colorado State Library.
- 11. Library Board members receive a complete orientation including a tour of the Library, a Trustee manual, a copy of the bylaws, policies, Colorado Library Law, Colorado Public Library Standards and pertinent minutes and information on issues currently being considered by the Library Board.
- 12. Board meetings are regularly scheduled with a minimum of six per year. Meetings are open, in compliance with the Colorado Open Meetings ("Sunshine") law, CRS 24-6-401-402. The Library Director is present at all board meetings. Written minutes are available for distribution to the public.

- 13. Library Governing Authority has the responsibility for hiring the Library Director according to a written job description.**
- 14. Library Governing Authority develops performance expectations for the Library Director, and uses them to annually appraise performance.**
- 15. Library Governing Authority sets goals for its own continuing education and performance, and annually reviews their performance.**
- 16. Library Governing Authority delegates the hiring of staff to the Library Director. Board members are not involved in the day-to-day operation of the library.**
- 17. Library has written policies to govern library personnel, operations and services. Policies include:**
 - Adoption of the ALA Library Bill of Rights**
 - ALA Freedom to Read Statement**
 - Freedom to View Statement**
 - Board of Trustees Statement of Ethics**
 - Professional Ethics**
 - Access to Electronic Information, Services and Networks**
 - Meeting Room usage**
 - Confidentiality of patron records**
 - Safety**
 - Security**
 - Internet Use (technology)**
- 18. Policies are approved and reviewed regularly by Library Governing Authority. When needed, new policies are written, approved, implemented, and distributed.**
- 19. Library uses surveys and other feedback tools and measures to determine the effectiveness of its services.**
- 20. Library reports statistics in the Colorado Public Library Annual Report.**
- 21. Library Governing Authority meets with elected officials and community members to inform them about library services and needs and advocates for the library.**
- 22. Library Director writes procedures that are regularly reviewed and revised as appropriate and made available to staff.**

- 23. Library Director regularly communicates with staff, not only sharing Library Governing Authority priorities, but also gathering significant staff concerns that may inform governing decisions.**

- 24. Library Director prepares and presents a report to the Library Governing Authority at all regular meetings. Each report should address current library statistical and financial information, human resource matters, library programs, needs, problems, and successes.**

- 25. The Library Director and the Library Governing Authority stay current with library related issues by way of the Colorado State Library (CSL), the Colorado Library Consortium (CLiC), the Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL), and the American Library Association (ALA) including Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends, and Foundations (ALTAFF).**

- 26. Library Director engages in activities, events, and publications in State (CAL), Regional (MPLA), and/or National (ALA) professional associations.**

- 27. Library Director and/or the library organization is a member of the State professional organization - Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL.)**

- 28. Library Director and the Library Governing Authority actively participate when critical legislative issues arise that affect the future of libraries.**