

Harnessing the Potential of a Library's Board

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Smithsonian Libraries

Advancing knowledge at home and around the world.

About Us

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Tina has her B.A. in Media Studies with a focus on International Communications from Penn State University and has a J.D. from the Widener University School of Law. She manages the Smithsonian Libraries Office of Advancement including major gifts, annual giving, public affairs, and events. Her previous fundraising experience includes the Penn State University Libraries and the Catholic University of America.

Tina Morrison

Advancement Officer, Smithsonian Libraries

Tina Morrison serves as Advancement Officer with the Smithsonian Libraries. Prior to her current role overseeing the Libraries' Annual Giving program and special events, she worked in Planned Giving and Major Gifts at the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the Arden Theatre Company, Philadelphia. Tina received her B.A. in Communications from the University of Pennsylvania





The Smithsonian Libraries promotes new ideas through knowledge sharing. We play a dynamic role in advancing scientific and cultural understanding and in preserving America's heritage. Our expert staff and extensive collections are a crucial resource for research and education communities at the Smithsonian, within the United States, and around the world.”



library.si.edu

About the Smithsonian Libraries Advisory Board



Advancing knowledge at home and around the world.

Harnessing the Potential of a Library's Board



SESSION OVERVIEW

- Establish board's role & goals
- Recruiting & Orientation
- Engagement & Evaluation

Establishing a Board's Role & Goals



Role of a Library's Board



June 4 Plotted Sen 72 17
5 Started Sen 72
(13 Typed Doc's script
20 Finished Sen 72
21 Delivered Sen 7
28 Paid for Sen 72
June 21 Plotted 2 Synopses
between June 14 - 18 Plotted 3 Syn



- Support needs & interests of your library
- Provide advice related to library's goals
- Promote and publicize the library
- Attract new and ongoing support
- Financially provide for the library

Strategic Staffing



Consider the following when developing a staffing plan for your board:

- Who will plan and staff your board meetings?
- Who will assist the board in planning and hosting events?
- How often will you update the board on library news and fundraising progress?
- Who is the board's **main staff contact** for questions, scheduling visits, tours or appointments?

Your Board's Mission

How do you envision a board advancing your library's mission?

Clarifying the mission and vision of your board will give members and board candidates a sense of how you expect them to help your cause.



Fundraising and advocacy are common themes in a library board's mission statement.

The following organizations have tools to help you articulate your board's mission:

- **Guide Star**
<http://www.guidestar.org/>
- **The Non Profit Times**
<http://www.thenonproffitimes.com/>

Sample Board Mission

Assist the Libraries in its mission of providing authoritative information and creating innovative services and programs for Smithsonian researchers, scholars, scientists, curators, historians and the general public.



Board Bylaws



Bylaws are the basic foundation for your board's operations.

Bylaws should address the following:

- Governance and Structure
- Board Committees & Membership
- Identification of Board Candidates & the Nominating Process
- Calendar of Meetings
- Terms of Board Service
- Board Member Expectations & Responsibilities



Sample bylaw templates:

- **Foundation Center**

<http://foundationcenter.org>

- **Grant Space** <http://grantspace.org>

- **Nolo LAW for ALL** <http://www.nolo.com>

Governance & Structure



Governance and Structure should address the general framework of your board.

Consider:

- Who has the authority to modify and approve your bylaws?
- What is the maximum size of your board?
- Who are your board's officers, terms, roles, and how they are elected?
 - Board officers often include Chair, Vice Chair, Secretary, and/or Treasurer.
- What are the provisions for ex-officio, emeritus, alumni, and/or honorary board members?

Calendar of Meetings & Terms of Service



Calendar of Meetings

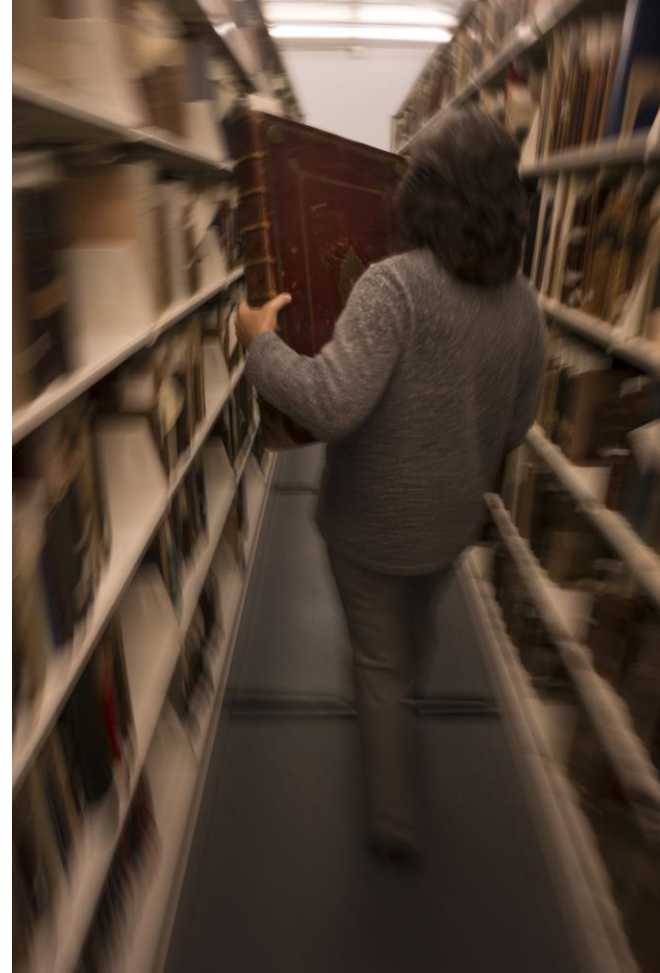
- How often and for how long will the board meet?
- Where will the board meet?
- How are board members given notice of meetings?
- What are the procedures for canceling a meeting?

Terms of Board Service

- How long is a term of service?
- How many terms can a board member serve?
- What are resignation and termination procedures?

Board Member Expectations & Responsibilities

- Prepare for, attend, and contribute to board and assigned committee meetings.
- Take responsibility for becoming educated about your library.
- Identify and present new board member candidates.
- Advocate and promote the events and activities of your library.
- Contribute financially to the success of your library and its mission.



Recruiting & New Board Member Orientation



Attracting Board Members That Work for You

Why Join a Board?

- Prestige
- Great community cause
- Networking
- Passion for organization's mission

Elevator Speech: Convey mission and passion



Identification of Board Candidates

What criteria should be considered to identify a board candidate?

Qualifications to consider:

- Interest in serving institutions like yours
- Financial capability of both annual support and campaign projects
- Skills or knowledge that could help your library achieve its mission
- Willingness to commit time
- Interest in subject area addressed by your library
- Community reputation
- Potential conflicts of interest



Recruiting Board Members



Consider your priorities and what knowledge base you could use to accomplish these tasks.

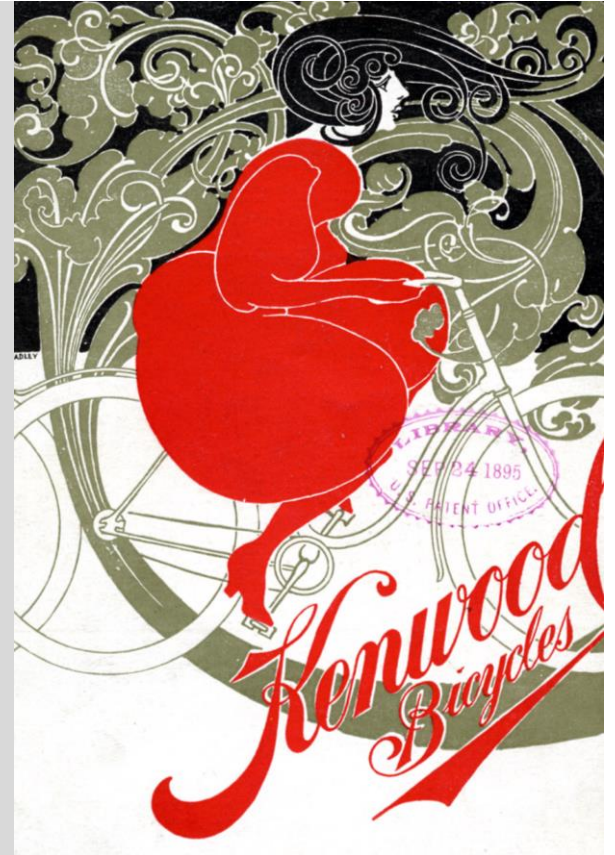
Focused Recruiting Efforts

- **Visibility issues?** Recruit someone in the marketing, branding or public relations.
- **New initiatives?** Is there a new science initiative or collection you'd like to promote? Recruit in the science related fields to increase your network and have a member who can attest to the importance of the program or collection.
- **Fundraising Woes?** Why not look for someone with fundraising experience?

Recruiting Process

A structured annual recruiting and orientation process will save you time and resources.

- Start new class each year
- Use annual recruiting model
- Build a consistent orientation experience



Sample Recruiting Timeline

TIMELINE	RECRUITING & ORIENTATION TASKS FOR BOARD	RECRUITING & ORIENTATION TASKS FOR STAFF
MARCH-MAY	<p>Board submits names and bios of candidates to Nominating Committee.</p> <p>Nominating Committee determines which candidates should be contacted to pursue board membership.</p>	<p>Staff conducts research on board candidates.</p>
JUNE-SEPTEMBER	<p>Nominating Committee presents the candidates to the board and the board votes on the nominations.</p>	<p>Staff contacts candidates and extends an invitation to visit library and meet selected board members.</p>
OCTOBER-DECEMBER	<p>Approved new board members are invited to participate on committee conference calls to determine which committee they would like to join.</p>	
JANUARY-FEBRUARY	<p>Board approves new board member orientation program.</p>	<p>Staff plans orientation program to kickoff new board members' terms.</p>

Recruiting: Nomination Forms



Nomination forms give members an overview of why the candidate should be considered for the board.

Nomination forms can address the following:

- Has candidate expressed interest in your library?
- Has candidate expressed interest in serving on the board?
- Do you anticipate that candidate will be a donor?
- What network(s) or community contact(s) can candidate introduce to your library?
- What skill set or background does candidate possess that will be relevant to your needs?

Board Orientation



Providing an orientation program for new board members will educate and introduce them to your staff members.

An orientation program could include:

- Overview and history of your organization.
- Outline of your organization's finance and administration.
- Current organizational initiatives.
- Fundraising goals and priorities.
- Tours of special collections and or other locations or branches
- Lunch or dinner with board members.

Clarifying Board Member Expectations

Board Handbook

A comprehensive handbook should include the following information:

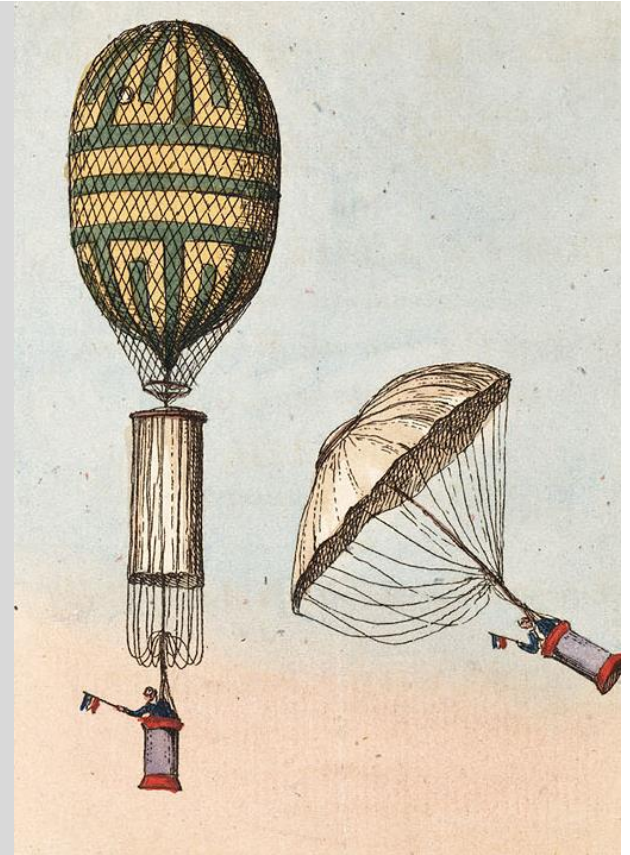
- Organization History
- Strategic Plan
- Mission and Vision
- Staff Organization Chart
- Contact Information
- Guide on Using Library Resources
- Campus and/or Library Locations Map
- Board Bylaws
- Board Member Expectations
- Fundraising Goals and Opportunities



Applying Term Limits

Applying term limits is a good way to keep your board dynamic.

Though it's hard to lose faithful and dedicated members, term limits can give members a point to review their commitment to your library. However, a term-renewal clause for exceptional members can always be added to your bylaws. In tougher scenarios, enforcing term limits is usually the best way to move ineffective or disruptive members off your board.



Board Engagement & Evaluation



Developing Strategic Board Meetings



Board Meetings:

- Schedule one year in advance
- Send board book/materials in advance
- Provide meeting agenda(s)

Agenda Items to Include:

- Update from the Director
- Committee reports
- Minutes approval
- Staff presentations
- Tours or lectures
- Time for open discussions
- Social events
- Ways to engage spouses

Focusing Board Priorities on Library Priorities

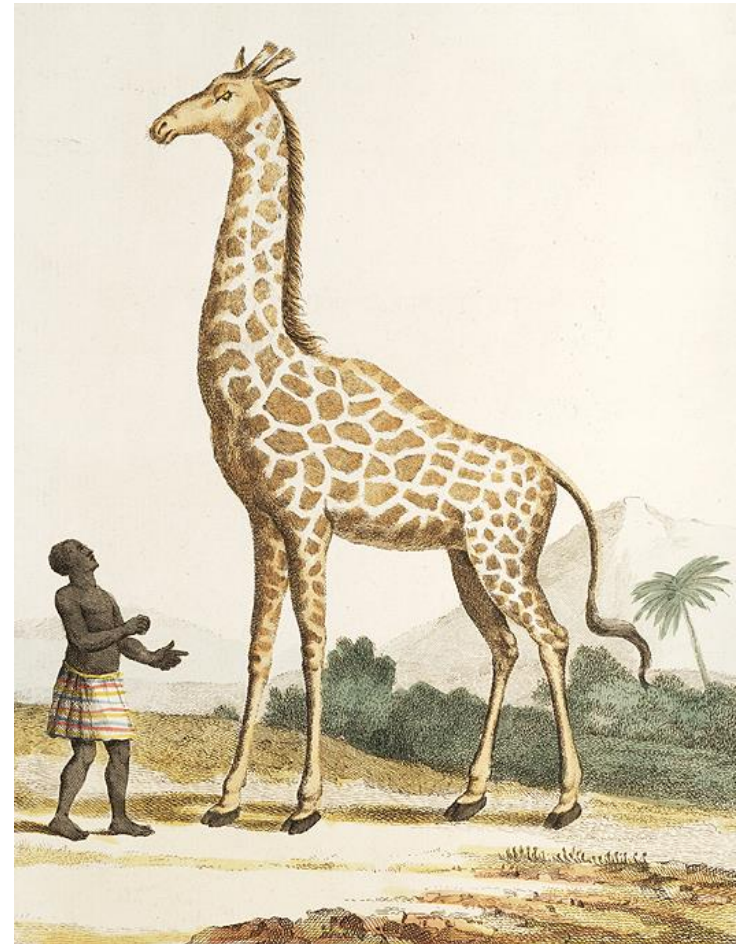
"My board has gone wild and has its own initiatives; anarchy has ensued..."

Common Scenarios

- Your board wants you to accept a gift that is not suitable for your collection.
- Your board wants to move forward with a board candidate you feel is unsuitable.
- The board criticizes your leadership, management style, or decisions.

Solutions

- Refer board to bylaws
- Keep staff and board continually apprised of ongoing work
- Bring in a consultant/colleague from a different organization
- Appoint strong advocates to Chair or Committee Chairs



Engaging the Board in Fundraising



Ways board can help with fundraising:

- Supply a list of prospects and work with members on appropriate ways to engage
- Host an event
- Give or get monetary support
- Make an introduction for you to visit a potential major donor
- Review solicitation letters and participate in solicitations
- Form a fundraising committee
- Attend fundraising training

Goals

- 100% annual giving and major gifts
- Board input results in engagement
- Regular fundraising updates and milestones result in an educated board



Establishing Board Committees

Developing standing and ad-hoc committees to engage your board will boost their productivity and effectiveness.

Best Practices: Assigning at least one staff member to each committee allows you to take advantage of a range of skill sets and gives the board exposure to a diverse range of staff. This also assures no one staff member is responsible for managing all of the committees

As you establish ad-hoc committees, consider the following:

- What are your priorities?
- How do you envision the board advancing your mission?
- Where do you need the most help?

Your board's committees should evolve to suit the changing needs of your library.



Board Committees

Standing Committees & Ad Hoc Committees

Standing committees are permanent committees that meet regularly.

They often include Executive Committee and a Nominating Committee.

Standing Committees

- List standing committees.
- Address the purpose, roles, responsibilities, and membership of each standing committee.
- **Note:** A small board may operate as a committee of the whole for a time.

Ad hoc committees are designed for a specific project or objective. They are often dissolved following the completion of a project or goal.

Ad Hoc Committees

- Describe if and when ad hoc committees may be formed.
- Describe the purpose, roles, responsibilities and membership of each current ad hoc committee.
- Address who approves the creation of an ad hoc committee?



Board Committee Composition



- Who appoints a member to a committee?
- Do all members need to be on a committee?
- What expectations are there of the committee?
- Will committees have chairs? If so, what are the expectations of chairs?
- What are the terms of service for committee members?

Sample Committee

Structure:

Standing Committees:

- Executive
- Nominating

Ad Hoc Committees:

- Marketing & Branding
- Collectors Council
- Education
- Major Gifts

Fundraising & Campaigns



The chair and the vice-chair of your board should be your greatest fundraising advocates.

The board's leadership, should assure the full board that fundraising is a good idea for your library and should be one of the board's highest priorities.

Your chair and vice chair should be able to help you institute a mandatory annual gift (or "dues") for board members.

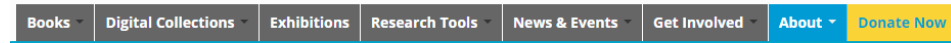
Establishing an annual gift policy will help your board become more invested in your fundraising goals.

Board Stewardship

How will you manage your board's welfare?

A board stewardship committee could create and administer board member surveys and conduct exit interviews. A committee like this could take charge of complaints and provide suggestions for remedies.

Best Practices: Add a board section to your website which includes board member profiles, current activities and events. Submit press releases announcing new board members to their local papers. These efforts will steward your members and give your organization publicity. Recognize board contributions, both financial and otherwise, during meetings or in your regular communications to the board.



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Smithsonian Libraries Advisory Board

The Smithsonian Libraries Advisory Board consists of members from across the United States appointed by the Smithsonian's Board of Regents. The mission of the board is to help the Libraries to provide authoritative information and create innovative services and programs for Smithsonian researchers, scholars, scientists, curators, historians and other staff, as well as the public at large.



Evaluating Board Members



How will you hold your board accountable?

Sample board “report cards” and self-evaluations can be found on the following websites:

National Council of Nonprofits

<http://www.councilofnonprofits.org>

Nonprofit Resource Center

<http://www.nprcenter.org/>

Final Thoughts: Keeping Your Board Interested and Engaged

Generate excitement by sharing your aspirations with board members and remind them of the progress you have made with their help!

Board Experience Survey Focus

- Ease in articulating the history, mission, and vision of your library.
- Understanding of your library's budget and finance operations.
- Knowledge of board's roles and responsibilities.
- Effectiveness of board meetings.
- Effectiveness of board committee structure.
- Understanding of fundraising priorities.



An annual survey can keep you apprised of what is working for your board.

Other Considerations:

- Offer exit interviews
- Create a plan for emeriti members' participation

Questions...?



Thank you!

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