

## **Finding New Board Members**

Potential board members may come from the ranks of Friends or volunteer groups. Present board members can use their own contacts to discover others who share the board's vision of the library in the community and who could add to that vision with their own talents. It is always a good idea to publicize the "job" beyond the circle of those already known to board members to find those who are outside that circle and who may have a great deal to offer the board.

The Harford County (Maryland) Library has developed a unique approach to finding new board members: advertising. The following notice was posted throughout the community.

### **NOTICE**

### **TRUSTEE CANDIDATE SEARCH**

**The Board of Library Trustees  
is in search of candidates  
to be considered for appointment  
to the board.**

**Please see the Branch Librarian for  
application forms and more  
information.**

**Application deadline is September 1.**

On the following pages are copies of the **Qualifications for Appointment to the Library Board of Trustees**, the **Questions for Prospective Board Candidates**, and the **Application for Appointment** which the Harford County Library prepared.

Thanks to Phil Place, former Harford County Library Director and Director of the Warioto Regional Library, Clarksville, Tennessee, for providing these materials.

## **Sample Outline of Qualifications for Appointment to Library Board of Trustees**

The Harford County (Maryland) Library prepared the flier below to distribute to those interested in becoming a member of the library board of trustees.

### **TRUSTEES . . .**

#### **Your Library Representatives**

The Board of Library Trustees operates under the Laws of Maryland, Article 77, and Harford County Code, Article 16, which tell how trustees are to be selected, what they are to do, and how long they will do it.

#### **HOW TRUSTEES ARE APPOINTED**

The County Executive appoints a trustee from a list submitted by the existing Board of Trustees. The appointment must be confirmed by the County Council. Trustees are selected to represent all areas of the county.

#### **TERMS OF OFFICE AND COMPENSATION**

A trustee is appointed for a term of five years and may be reappointed for a second term of five years. Trustees receive no payment for their work.

#### **WHAT TRUSTEES DO**

The trustees' duties are established in State and County law and include these:

- ✓ establish and operate the library to provide free service
- ✓ set library policy
- ✓ employ a director to run everyday affairs
- ✓ advise in the preparation of and approve the budget
- ✓ control the spending of funds received by the library
- ✓ adopt rules and regulations for use of the library
- ✓ select locations and approve plans for branch buildings
- ✓ do anything else necessary for the proper control and development of the library

#### **GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS**

- Demonstrated interest in the library
- Readiness to devote time and effort
- An open mind coupled with respect for the opinion of others
- Courage to plan creatively, to carry out plans effectively, and to withstand pressures and prejudices
- Demonstrated initiative
- Ability to analyze efficiency of business procedures and to be part of the accountability process to the public

#### **PRACTICAL BACKGROUND AND/OR DIRECT EXPERIENCE IN SOME OF THESE AREAS IS DESIRABLE**

- Law/the operation of government
- Architecture/building programs
- Education
- Accounting/financial management
- Business
- Executive/management techniques
- Long-term planning
- Personnel management
- The operation of other public boards and/or commissions
- Technology and its applications
- Involvement in community organizations

## **Sample Questions for Prospective Board Candidates**

The Harford County (Maryland) Library prepared the questions below to distribute to those interested in becoming a member of the library board of trustees.

# **QUESTIONS - PROSPECTIVE BOARD CANDIDATES**

1. Why are you interested in serving on the Board of Trustees?
2. What experience do you have that you believe would make you a particularly desirable candidate for the appointment?
3. What community activities have you been involved with which you believe prepare you to serve on the Board of Trustees?
4. Tell us of your impression of the time needed and the talents required to be an effective Board member?
5. Please tell us about your history as a library user and what you know as a customer of this library system.
6. As a trustee, how would you use your background as an advocate for library service in Harford County and the State of Maryland?
7. How do you feel about censorship?

**Sample Application for Appointment**

The Harford County (Maryland) Library developed the following application for prospective board candidates.

**HARFORD COUNTY BOARD OF LIBRARY TRUSTEES  
APPLICATION FOR APPOINTMENT**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

The Board is seeking candidates who have shown an interest in libraries and who can bring demonstrated leadership and expertise to its membership. Please take a few moments to answer the following questions:

1. How long have you been a resident of Harford County?
2. What is your professional and/or focus of interest?
3. Are there any time restrictions which would limit your ability to attend meetings and library functions?
4. What groups or organizations have you been, or are currently, associated with in Harford County?
5. What activities or functions have you participated in concerning Harford County Library?

6. Please indicate those area(s) in which your knowledge would be of benefit to the Library Board:

- |  |                                     |   |
|--|-------------------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Finance             | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel  | <input type="checkbox"/> Long Range Planning    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Legal               | <input type="checkbox"/> Automation | <input type="checkbox"/> Building Programs      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Public Relations    | <input type="checkbox"/> Management | <input type="checkbox"/> Governmental Relations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Energy Conservation |                                     |   |

Other:

7. What do you see as the library's role in the future?
8. What do you feel are the responsibilities of a Board member?
9. Please use back of page for any additional information you think would be appropriate for our consideration.

Return this application together with your resume to: Office of the Director.  
Applications must be received by 5 p.m. September 1st.  
For more information, call : Dorothy Jones, Secretary to the Director, xxx.xxxx.