

Some Fun Scenarios!

Trustee scenario A: You are beginning the process of recruiting a new director for your small-town library. Besides the director, there is a children's librarian and three part-time clerks. The former director was a beloved person in the community who loved to chat with everyone who came through the door. Thanks to her personality and strength in building relationships, she has left a largely favorable impression on the community on behalf of the library. She was very good at working with the library foundation and getting along with everyone in local government. Unfortunately, her attention to detail was lacking, and so everything from reporting to copy cataloging to weeding the collection to ongoing facilities maintenance had been somewhat neglected, and she would sometimes miss deadlines without multiple reminders.

- What are the top three skills that the board wants the new director to have?
- What are the top three personality traits that this person needs to have?
- Do you need to make change or remove any responsibilities from the director's duties so that this person can focus on their top priorities? If so, who could take care of those responsibilities if not the director? Would this involve a job reclassification and/or salary adjustment for another staff person?

Trustee scenario B: It's time for the director's annual performance evaluation. The director has performed his duties to a satisfactory degree and has met his stated work plan goals, but he has an antagonistic relationship with one trustee on the board for personal reasons. This trustee has been approached by a few members of the public and even a staff person who has said that the director's attitude is "arrogant" and "unapproachable." The trustee also noted that there was an anonymous Google review for the library saying that the director was "rude."

The director has requested that the performance evaluation be conducted in the public meeting, but the trustee wants to close the meeting so that they can have an honest discussion about the director's attitude and what the staff person told the trustee.

- How should the trustee handle the staff person's complaint?
- How should the board handle this performance evaluation?

Director scenario A: You are a new library director, and two of the staff you've inherited are both full-time circulation clerks. Your initial observations are that one of the clerks (Mandy) has very good attention to detail and is efficient at the job but has a terrible demeanor for working with the public, often ignoring people at the front desk or the ringing phone; while the other clerk (Candy) is very personable, has great customer service skills, and seems to enjoy helping library patrons find what they need, but often neglects or underperforms the more detail-oriented responsibilities of the job. Mandy and Candy share an office space and cannot stand one another. Each one has come to your office separately nearly every day to complain about the other. If you don't do something about this situation soon, they say, they will complain to the board about a hostile work environment.

They have never had a performance evaluation or set any work plan goals.

- What should you do?

Director scenario B: You have just hired a new person named Candy to be your new outreach assistant! Candy is coming from a different library system. She will drive a county vehicle to three different communities out in the county twice a week to provide materials and programming. Another staff person who is currently at your library, Randy, a circulation clerk, applied for the same job but was not interviewed because he did not have the required qualifications or skills.

- What is on your to-do list to get ready before Candy's first day?
- What is on your checklist for Candy's first day of work?
- What, if anything, should you do to acknowledge Randy's application?