

CHAPTER 1 TRY THIS: KNOW YOUR LIBRARY

What type of public library do I serve as a board member?

- ☐ Municipal government (City, town, or village)
- ☐ County/Parish
- ☐ Library District
- ☐ Multi-jurisdictional (school/public combined, city/county)

I am member of a(n)

- ☐ governing board.
- ☐ advisory board.

My term of office is _____ year(s).

Who does the library serve? What is its jurisdiction or legal service area?

- You can review a map of the legal service area with the Colorado State Library.
- You can review community data from the US Census office or reach out to the Colorado State Library.

From where does the library receive its funding?

- You can review revenue in your library's budget or annual audit.

CHAPTER 2 TRY THIS: SITUATIONS

The best way to approach situations that come your way as a trustee is to practice and be prepared. Read through the scenarios on the next page and consider how you would respond based on the roles and responsibilities of a Colorado public library board trustee.

CHALLENGE TO MATERIALS

You are at the supermarket. Someone approaches you and asks you, as a library trustee, what your opinion is of keeping pornographic books in the library where children can be damaged by them. How do you respond?

PROGRAM POSSIBILITY

At the Colorado Association of Libraries Annual Conference (CALCON), you become aware of a work skills virtual reality program that allows individuals to earn pre-apprenticeship certifications in plumbing, electrical, or construction. You'd like to offer the program at your library. How do you go about this process?

STAFFING

A staff member is concerned about benefit package changes and reaches out to you to set up an appointment.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

As an active and engaged trustee who cares about financial stewardship, you see an opportunity to purchase sell furniture from your store through the Friends to be used in the library. Consider how to proceed.

CHAPTER 3 TRY THIS: LIBRARY TRUSTEE SELF ASSESSMENT

Regular **self-assessment** ensures that trustees are accountable to the organization and its stakeholders. Take a moment to complete the Library Trustee Self-Assessment on the following pages. You will use your responses as you navigate the next chapter to identify strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results.

LIBRARY TRUSTEE SELF ASSESSMENT

BOARD DOCUMENTS

(*ITEMS ARE STATUTORILY REQUIRED)

Bylaws*

- ☐ We have ☐ I can locate
- ☐ The public can access without a CORA Request

Strategic Plan/Strategic Priorities

- ☐ We have ☐ I can locate
- ☐ The public can access without a CORA Request

Financial Plan

- ☐ We have ☐ I can locate
- ☐ The public can access without a CORA Request

Capital Plan

- ☐ We have ☐ I can locate
- ☐ The public can access without a CORA Request

Financial Audit*

- ☐ We have ☐ I can locate
- ☐ The public can access without a CORA Request

Library Policies*

- ☐ We have ☐ I can locate
- ☐ The public can access without a CORA Request

Annual Report

- ☐ We have ☐ I can locate
- ☐ The public can access without a CORA Request

LEADERSHIP

I can share the goals of the library's strategic plan or strategic priorities.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I can share with others our library's current actions towards the strategic plan or strategic priorities.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I know the library's core values and ethical standards that drive my decision making.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I visit the library and participate in library programs or events.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I promote the library with local community leaders, stakeholder groups, or public officials by sharing our impact and relevance at least 2 times a year.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I have established a relationship with my local and state representatives, and discuss library issues with them, advocating for their support.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I belong to a state or national library organization and/or attend conferences.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I can share the goals of the library's strategic plan or strategic priorities.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I have read one or more national library organization journals or blog posts over the past six months.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I am aware of legislation, trends, issues, and emerging risks affecting public libraries.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

GOVERNANCE

Bylaws are followed.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

Library policies allow effective management and legal compliance.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I am a member of a board committee.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I understand and respect the distinct roles and duties of the library director, the library board, the Foundation, and Friends.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I route my requests of staff through the library director.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

The library director is consistently evaluated.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

A compensation review has occurred.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I am prepared for board and committee meetings by reviewing the board packet prior to meetings so I can ask relevant questions and make better decisions.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I meet my attendance obligation for board and committee meetings.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I ask relevant questions and contribute to discussion about library business during board and committee meetings.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

After speaking, I allow all other trustees to speak before speaking again.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

STEWARDSHIP

I am able to answer questions about the expenses and revenue of the budget.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I am aware of our reserve funds, rough amounts, and purpose behind.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I review at least quarterly the budget to actuals and spending to know the financial standing of the library and where funds are being spent.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I can summarize the key findings including the financial picture and recommendations of the library.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

MANAGEMENT

I seek out and recommend potential trustees.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I participate in orienting new trustees.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

I follow through on my board commitments.

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

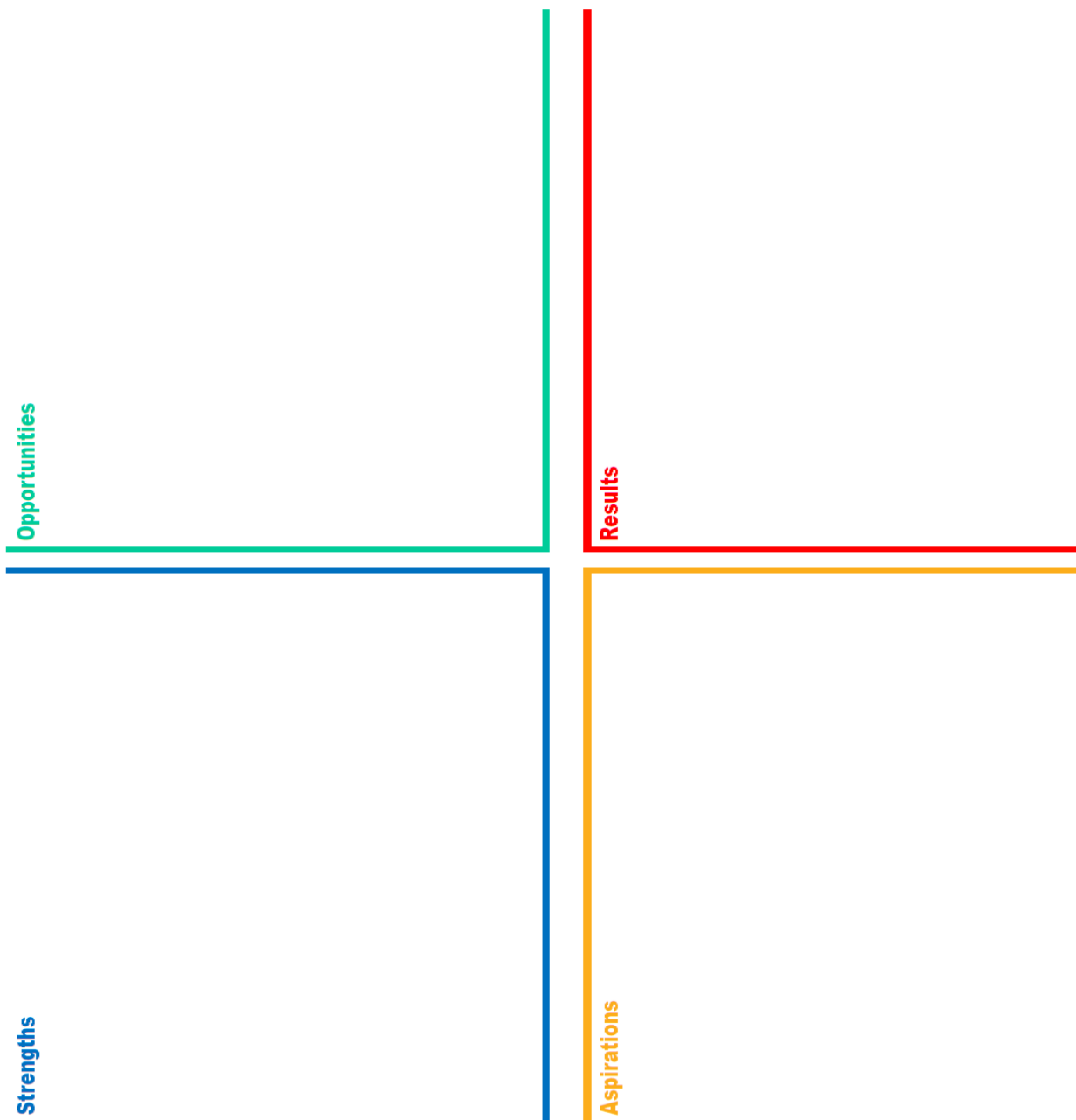
I support other trustees by ... (Fill in the blank)

☐ Yes ☐ Sometimes ☐ No ☐ Uncertain

CHAPTER 4 TRY THIS: SOAR ANALYSIS

In order to provide guidance on professional development as well as identify potential target markets for selecting candidates for the board of trustees, take the results from the Library Trustee Self-Evaluation from Meetings, Committees, and More chapter and complete the SOAR analysis on the following page.

A SOAR analysis is a planning tool focused on assets to consider strengths, opportunities, aspirations, and results. Once you have completed the analysis, determine what goals, development, and skill sets the board has and needs to best serve the community.



CHAPTER 6 TRY THIS: POLICY DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

Select one of your library's policies. Use the policy development framework to determine if all parts are identifiable in the policy and if the policy is still relevant.

POLICY TITLE

PURPOSE STATEMENT

APPLICABILITY STATEMENT

DEFINITIONS

POLICY STATEMENT

SOURCES OF HELP

--

POLICY AUTHORITY

--

RELATED FORMS, POLICIES, REFERENCES

--

DEVELOPMENT DATE _____

REVIEWED DATE _____

CHAPTER 7 TRY THIS: STRATEGIC PLAN

Develop an inventory of your organizations long range plans and tools that communicate board vision to staff action steps.

VISION, MISSION, AND VALUES

What are the vision, mission, and values of your library?

Vision

Mission Vision

Values Vision

LONG-RANGE PLANS

Do you have long-range plans for the follow areas and when were they created?

- ☐ Finances ☐ Staffing ☐ Facilities & Infrastructure
- ☐ Capital Projects ☐ Programs, Services & Collections

REVIEW

Review the goals, objectives, and priorities of the above plans.

ANALYSIS

Based on the reports from your library director, what can you communicate to your stakeholders about the library’s future?

Is there information in reports from your library director that you need to communicate to your stakeholders about the library’s future?

What long-range plans do you believe are needed?

- ☐ Finances
- ☐ Staffing
- ☐ Facilities & Infrastructure
- ☐ Technology
- ☐ Capital Projects
- ☒ Programs, Services & Collections

How will you bring this to your board’s attention?

CHAPTER 8 TRY THIS: DIRECTOR'S REVIEW

To fulfill their oversight role effectively, the Board of Trustees must be thoroughly familiar with the Director's review process.

TO UNDERSTAND THE PROCESS AND OVERSIGHT

- ☐ Become familiar with the process for the library director's review.
- ☐ Identify who oversees the procedures for the review (e.g., Board President, designated committee, or full Board).
- ☐ Identify a clear timeline for coaching, goal setting, and the formal evaluation.

OBTAIN AND REVIEW KEY DOCUMENTS

- ☐ Obtain a copy of the library director's job description.
- ☐ Obtain a copy of the procedures for the review.
- ☐ Obtain a copy of the tools used for evaluation (e.g., performance metrics, self-assessment forms).

PERFORM A CRITICAL ALIGNMENT CHECK

Compare the job description to the evaluation tool.

- ☐ Are there areas in the job description that are not addressed in the evaluation tool? (This indicates a gap in accountability.)
- ☐ Are the correct people being asked for feedback for the evaluation?
- ☐ Are there areas being evaluated that are not included in the job description? (This indicates a potential mismatch between expectations and formal duties.)

CHAPTER 9 TRY THIS: THE POWER OF YOUR LIBRARY'S STORY

Everybody has a library story. Keep it short & simple. When you are speaking to people, ask to hear their library story. Then share a library story.

THE LIBRARY STORY

Identify a project/services/focus

Identify a hero (patron) who has participated in this project/service/focus. Describe this individual.

What problem was the patron trying to solve?

What was the impact to the patron by engaging in the library project/service/focus?

The hero is not the only one. Find data to show how many others have been impacted by the library.

- LRS.org
- Board report
- Community Reports
- Director
- Census
- Strategic Plan

That is all you need to demonstrate the impact and relevance of your library.

THE ASK

Now, if you have a related ask, add at the end. Ideally, you will have already built relationships by showing the impact and relevance of the story before you request something from those you are speaking.

If an ask, what are you asking for keeping in mind the connection of your hero to the person you are speaking.

Who are you going to tell this story? (Check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Commissioner | ☐ Town Manager/Council |
| ☐ Local Chamber of Commerce | ☐ Neighbor |
| ☐ Representative (state, federal) | ☐ Bartender/Budtender/Soultender |
| ☐ Non-Profit Leader | ☐ Other_____ |
| ☐ Local Tourism Board | |

CHAPTER 10 TRY THIS: MOU REVIEW

Being aware of your relationships with other organizations as well as responsibilities demonstrates you are an informed trustee.

INVENTORY

Identify all the MOUs that exist between your public library and other organizations.

Are they readily available to trustees for access and review?

When were they last reviewed as a board?

REVIEW

What is going right?

What requires review to either put into practice or reconsider inclusion in the MOU?

NEXT STEPS

When is the next board review to occur?