

<b>Policy 1-4</b>	<b>Board Responsibilities</b>	<b>Created: 3/4/2020 Approved: 3/12/2020</b>
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**I. Background**

Serving as a member of the Jackson County Library District Board of Directors (the “Board”) entails a commitment to being actively involved in setting the direction of the District and, most importantly, serving the best interests of the community and District constituents. Collectively, the Board has the final authority and fiduciary responsibility for the Library and its services. The Board hires the Library Director, provides fiscal oversight, makes and approves District policies, sets the mission and direction of the District, establishes strategic goals and objectives, advocates for the District, and is directly accountable to the public. As a governing body, the Board must uphold the public’s trust in the District to ensure that the Library is well run, meets the needs of the members of the community, responds to a changing environment, and safeguards the right of every citizen in the community to receive equitable and unfettered access to excellent library services and collections.

**II. Board Member Job Description**

The core responsibilities of Board members are few in number but broad in scope. They are:

- Select and hire a qualified Library Director;
- Secure adequate funding for the Library’s service program;
- Exercise fiduciary responsibility for the use of public and private funds;
- Adopt policies and rules regarding Library governance and use;
- Regularly plan and evaluate the Library’s service program;
- Promote the Library in the local community and in society in general;
- Conduct the business of the Library in an open and ethical manner in compliance with all applicable laws and regulations.

Everything the Library District Board does either falls within one of these duties or is done in support of them. A Board member makes a personal commitment to contribute the time and energy to carry out these duties faithfully. Although the Board is legally responsible for all aspects of the District, it is unreasonable to expect a Board member or the whole Board to be expert on every activity or concern that affects the Library District. Sometimes the most important thing a Board can do is acknowledge that it does not have enough information or resources, and ask for help. It is also important to remember that the Board’s authority, while broad, is a collective authority. Board members must work cooperatively with other members of the Board; no individual Board member can speak or act for the full Board unless specifically empowered to do so.

### **III. Board Responsibilities**

#### **1. Communications.**

*a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Develop regular channels of communication with Board members and the Library Director.
- Develop procedures for bringing staff opinions and recommendations to the Board, as well as Board opinions and decisions to the staff.
- Invite non-Board members, other local governments, and groups to Board or committee meetings or other types of Board sponsored assemblies to explore and develop approaches to common concerns.
- Recognize that certain information obtained at Board meetings may be non- public and confidential, making disclosure a breach of trust.
- Respect the opinion of other members and accept the principle of majority rule in Board decisions.

#### **2. Financial.**

*a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Arrange for deposit and disbursement of tax funds, grant monies, and donations.
- Establish a Budget Committee.
- Approve the annual budget, and assess, levy, and collect property taxes (including setting the tax rate within the limits approved by the electors).
- Monitor District finances and the budget, setting policy or taking action to ensure the fiscal integrity of the organization.

#### **3. Policies, Objectives, and Plans.**

*a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Abide by and become familiar with all laws and policies governing the operation of the District.
- Approve the annual strategic plan or plan of operations.
- Approve policies for the organization.
- Recognize that the Library Director should have full administrative authority for properly discharging the duties of managing the operation within the limits of the established Board policy. The Board's basic function is policy making – not administrative.

- Develop and approve long-range plan of growth and development for the District.
- Approve specific important projects.
- Approve any significant departure from established plans or policy.
- Receive and pass on committee or other planning body recommendations.
- Ensure that program objectives are assigned to the proper planning or implementing subgroups.
- Where applicable, bring other local governments or community groups into the planning and decision-making process.
- Approve contracts binding the District.
- Approve major changes in the District's organization or structure.
- Approve Board plans of action.
- Take action as necessary for operation of the District by passing District motions and resolutions.

#### **4. Management.**

##### *a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Select the District president and other officers.
- Hire the Library Director.
- Define the duties and responsibilities for the Board president, officers, Library Director, and major committee chairpersons.
- Select legal counsel and consultants for the Board.
- Approve contracts for professional services required by and for the Board.
- Authorize officers or Board agents to enter into contracts or to sign other written instruments and to take financial actions.
- Approve the plan, form, and amount of management compensation, that is, salaries, bonuses, vacation, travel, and so on.
- Evaluate the performance of the Library Director annually.
- Approve the form and amount of reimbursement for Board members.
- Approve programs for management development.
- Provide advice and consultation to management on matters within the purview of the Board's responsibilities.

## **5. Employee Relations.**

*a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Approve any employee benefit plans.
- Insist that personnel complaints go through a proper chain of command. If not resolved, only then should the Board get involved.
- Not allow personnel problems, other than problems with the Library Director, to be brought into Board considerations.

## **6. Control.**

*a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Identify types of information needed by the Board to analyze effectively the District's directions and achievements. Create a process for collecting and analyzing information.
- Realize that the citizens within the boundaries of the District are the true "owners" of the District.
- Review and assess the organization's performance against objectives, resources, plans, policies, and services rendered.
- Analyze major "shortfalls" in achievement.
- Identify obstacles, sense changing needs, and propose new directions or goals.
- Ensure that the District is in compliance with all federal, state, and local laws.

## **7. Board of Directors.**

*a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Strive to attend all meetings and come prepared to participate in discussion of topics on the agenda.
- Motivate Board members to accept positions of leadership and responsibility.
- Define powers and responsibilities of committees of the Board.
- Appoint, change, or abolish committees of the Board.
- Not allow individual Board members to make commitments on any matter that should come before the Board as a whole. Recognize that an individual Board member has no legal status to act for the entire Board.

- Realize that if a quorum of the Board meets to make a decision or to deliberate, then the meeting is considered a public meeting and must comply with all of the requirements of the Oregon Public Meetings Laws.
- Know that discussions on matters of overall policy outside of regular Board meetings can violate the open meetings law.

**8. Public Accountability.**

*a. Board responsibilities include the following:*

- Submit annual financial reports to the Secretary of State Audits Division.
- Keep the public informed on all District matters.
- Make decisions based on the wishes and needs of the public.
- Spend the District's money with prudence and trust.
- Place the needs of the public above the ambitions of the Board or the District.