

## **Trustee Orientation: Things Every Trustee Should Know**

Responsibility for planning and conducting the new trustee orientation is shared with the board president, other board members, and the library director. The specifics will vary depending on your library governance structure and relationship to the community you serve.

All new trustees should receive a tour of the library, an opportunity to meet the staff, and an orientation to the library's website and online resources. It is considered best practice to provide every library trustee with a specific library e-mail account to clearly distinguish library-related email correspondence from personal email (since library-related email may be subject to public records requests).

All trustees should receive information on the items below:

### ***Who is involved and what do they do?***

- Names and contact information of the following:
  - board members (and years of term expiration – if applicable)
  - library staff
  - key volunteers
  - officers of the Friends of the Library group
  - selectboard members/village trustees of town(s) served
  - town clerk of town(s) served
  - town administrator/manager of town(s) served
- Names of board officers
- Name of board committees and members of each
- Schedule of board meeting dates
- Copy of the Manual for Vermont Library Trustees

### ***What are we doing now?***

- Is your library municipal, incorporated, or a school-public hybrid (also known as a community library)?
- Who owns the library building and how is the building run/maintained?
- Board yearly calendar detailing monthly tasks
- Board by-laws
- Open Meeting Law Information
- Library policies
- State Library Standards and how the library measures up
- Staff job descriptions
- Library hours, phone number, website address, services provided
- Library annual report
- Recent promotional materials
- Recent accomplishments and challenges
- Current partnerships with other organizations in the community
- Your own library card

***Where have we come from and where are we going?***

- ❑ Library mission and goals
- ❑ Long range plan/Strategic plan
- ❑ Technology plan
- ❑ Projects in progress
- ❑ Library history summary
- ❑ Census profile of town(s) served
- ❑ Town plan and latest annual report
- ❑ Current year's budget and latest financial statement
- ❑ Detail of how library is funded – including where funding comes from and percentage of overall budget from each source

***What are the recent issues we've addressed?***

- ❑ Annual building inspection to assess physical condition, appearance, safety
- ❑ Minutes of past board meetings
- ❑ Past librarian's reports and information

***Where can we go for help?***

- Vermont Department of Libraries <http://libraries.vermont.gov/>
- Vermont Library Association and Vermont Library Association Trustee Section [www.vermontlibraries.org](http://www.vermontlibraries.org)
- Online version of this manual at: [http://libraries.vermont.gov/services/public\\_libraries/trustees](http://libraries.vermont.gov/services/public_libraries/trustees)
- Vermont statutes pertaining to public libraries (*Vermont Statutes Annotated/VSA*)
- *The Law of Public Libraries* [http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/PublicLibraries/Trustees/law\\_of\\_public\\_libraries.pdf](http://libraries.vermont.gov/sites/libraries/files/PublicLibraries/Trustees/law_of_public_libraries.pdf)
- Vermont Department of Libraries email list servs: <https://libraries.vermont.gov/services/news/listservs>
- Town officials, Friends of the Library members, area library trustees and librarians
- American Library Association and United for Libraries <http://www.ala.org/united/>