

THE RIGHT STUFF Defining the Role of Your Library Director and Conducting a Successful Search

NHLTA – ANNUAL CONFERENCE - JUNE 5, 2024

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About the Speakers

ROSEMARY D'ARCY: Owner of D'Arcy & Associates consulting firm specializing in organizational and management development, strategic planning and executive coaching. Rosemary holds a BA from Merrimack College and an MLS from the University of Rhode Island. She also received a certificate from Harvard University for the Management of Lifelong Learning. She served as a school, public and special librarian in her early career. She served as a trustee at the Greenville Public Library in Greenville, RI and for ten years as a trustee and chair of the Minot-Sleeper Library in Bristol, NH. She currently serves as a member of the NHLTA Board and is chair of the Education Committee and Co-chair of the 2024 Annual Conference.

DEB CAPLAN: Currently, a career consultant helping job-seekers with employment search strategies. Deb's early career includes senior HR roles in the public and private sectors and in the executive search and placement industry. She served as an Alternate Library Trustee for the Peterborough Town Library, Peterborough, NH, on the library's capital campaign committee and on the library director search committee. She now serves on the NHLTA Board and is Co-Chair of the Annual Conference. Deb holds an M.L.S. from Simmons College/Boston MA and a B.A. from Brandeis University/Waltham MA.

BRITTANY DURGIN: Library Director at Moultonborough Public Library. With seven years experience as a library director in New Hampshire public libraries, she has led and executed a strategic planning initiative, participated in statewide advocacy efforts, and has expanded library services. Brittany helped launch and served as chair of New Hampshire Library Association's Sustainability Committee, with which she is still an active member. She also serves on NHLA's Advocacy Committee and was a member of NHLA's first Strategic Planning Committee in 2021. Brittany has earned numerous grant awards for the libraries where she has served and continues to offer her time as a grant reviewer and consultant for New Hampshire Charitable Foundation's Library Technology Grant Program.

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AGENDA

- Creating/Updating an effective Library Director Job Description
- Ensuring a Successful Process of Hiring a New Director

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Job Description

- Purpose - provides clarity and outlines scope and limits of authority
- Components of the Job Description
- Format
- Getting buy-in and input on the description
- Best Practices
- Questions

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Purpose of Job Description

- Clarity
- Scope and limits of authority
- Defines ideal person
- Forms basis for performance review
- Review and update periodically

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American Library Association Website

Library Director position oversees the largest range of duties in the library.

- **Rural setting:** The director may be the only regularly scheduled employee and may handle everything from locking the doors to paying the bills.
- **Large urban setting:** The "city librarian" or director may oversee a staff of dozens and many branches. In a large library the director may have responsibility for maintenance and accounting departments.

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JOB DESCRIPTION FORMAT

- American Library Association
 - Choose a format that is consistent with other town/city departments
 - Google "job description formats"
- https://www.webjunction.org/documents/webjunction/Library_Director_Job_Descriptions.html

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Getting Buy-In and InPut

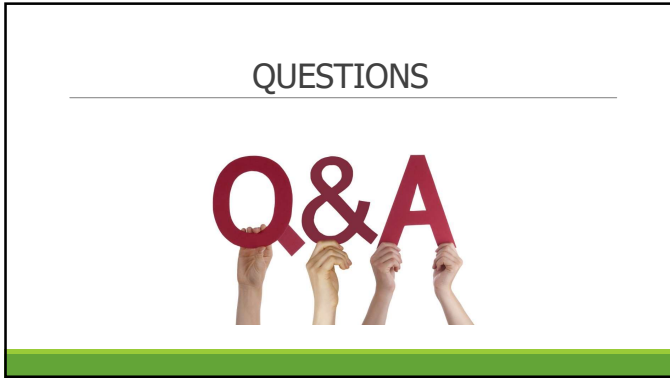
Position does not exist in a vacuum
 Identify key constituents (Town administration, local patrons, Friends, donors, staff, schools, civic organizations, etc.)
 Ask for input from Town Administrator/Manager of HR officer
 Helps to build community and buy-in

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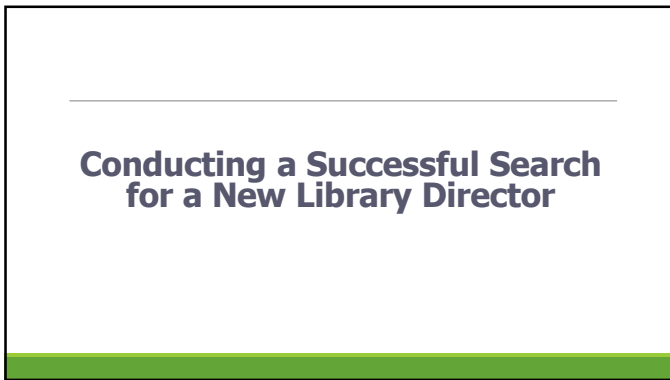
BEST PRACTICES

- Review job description periodically to reflect changing priorities
- Ask incumbent for input
- Get input from constituents

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The Search Committee

Composition – Maximum 5-7 people

- Trustees
- Members of the Friends group
- Community Members
- Foundation Members
- Others

Appoint Chair/Co-Chairs

Clarify Scope of Work

Create Timeline

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Prioritizing the Qualifications

What are the library's greatest needs...Collection Development... Adult Programming... Personnel Management skills...Fundraising...Public Speaking?

What educational qualifications do you want?

- MLS? – May Limit pool of applicants
- What prior experience do you want
- Public Library? Supervisory?
- Management? Budget/ Financial Experience?

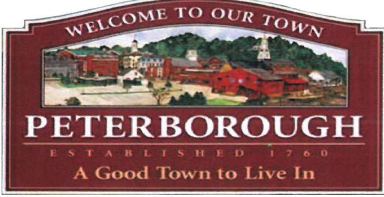
What personality/character traits are you seeking?
What hasn't worked in the past?

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The Job Posting

- No Need to recreate the Wheel –examples posted on-line by other libraries
- Ask for a Cover Letter, Resume and List of References
- List Salary/Range as determined by the Board of Trustees
- Set a deadline or keep it "Open Till Filled".
- Online posting is best: many are free.
- Create an email address for applicants to reply to:
 - XYZLibraryDirectorSearch@gmail.com

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YOU ARE MARKETING NOT ONLY THE JOB, BUT YOUR TOWN AND SURROUNDING AREA.

CONSIDER WRITING A ONE PAGE PROMOTION OF YOUR COMMUNITY AND SURROUNDING AREA TO BE USED AS AN INTRODUCTION TO YOUR JOB DESCRIPTION.

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Marketing & Advertising Things to Consider

1. Indicating Your Hiring Salary Range/Options:
 - Be specific
 - Give a range
 - "DOE" – Depends on Experience
 - Be Silent!
2. Advertising the job: Determine \$\$ available.
3. Determine \$\$ available for bringing in candidates for interviews.
4. Relocation: Is there \$\$ money available? (if not, say so.)
5. Receiving Resumes: Decide who will receive resumes when they come in? Set up and monitor the email box.

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MARKETING & ADVERTISING

Identify Recruiting/Posting Resources

Local American Library Association Chapters New England Library Association (NELA) http://www.nelib.org Connecticut Library Association http://ctlibrarians.org Maine Library Association Job Line http://mainelibraries.org Massachusetts Library Association http://www.masslib.org	New Hampshire Library Association http://nhlibrarians.org Rhode Island Library Association http://www.rilibraries.org Vermont Library Association http://vermontlibraries.org Job Listings GOOGLE: "Library director job boards" • National Job Lines American Library Association JobLIST The Chronicle of Higher Education
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MARKETING & ADVERTISING
Cast a Wide Net

<p>New England Job lines</p> <p>New Hampshire https://www.nhsl.dncr.nh.gov</p> <p>Massachusetts http://mbic.state.ma.us</p> <p>Simmons College Library School New England Jobline http://slis-jobline.simmons.edu</p> <p>Boston Chapter of the Special Libraries Association</p> <p>Maine http://www.maine.gov/msl/lis/jobjar</p>	<p>Get prices for Newspaper/Internet Ads: Save Money!</p> <p>Condense language and/or use a link to the full description.</p> <p>Local & regional newspapers: Manchester Union Leader Concord Monitor Boston Globe Hartford Courant The Portland Press Herald, etc.</p> <p>Provides coverage for New England! Library job postings http://www.libraryjobpostings.org/</p>
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Marketing & Advertising
CAST YOUR NET

Email marketing piece as an attachment to your email lists.

Use Social Media

Place Advertisements

- Include a deadline to respond.
- Include an email address AND a snail mail address to send responses.

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SCREENING APPLICANTS

- ▶ Create screening/scoring tool for search committee to use
- ▶ Meet to review resumes, agree on top candidates
- ▶ Determine if you want to do phone pre-screening
- ▶ Conduct Preliminary/Informal References
 - Google the applicants names.
 - Make informal inquiries, if you know people who may know applicant.
 - **Caution:** Be careful not to jeopardize the applicants current position.

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Role of the Library Staff

- Consider interviewing library staff before the search begins, to learn what they think are key library needs and issues
- Consider having finalists meet the staff before or after the final interviews, and then share their feedback about what they think the candidate's strengths are in managing the day to day activities of the library.

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Narrow the Candidate Pool

Send each candidate a series of 4-6 questions.

Brainstorm questions/topics to ask applicants to address.

This affords an opportunity to:

- assess their writing ability.
- understand their thinking.

Ask them to limit their responses to 2-3 pages.

Have the candidates write a press release announcing their own hiring.

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Initial Interviews In-Person/Zoom

Review interview do's and don'ts (Legal)

Determine where interviews will take place (library, another location, zoom)

Create a list of questions to use for ALL candidates – assign different questions to committee members

Consider a scoring/evaluation sheet to assess all candidates against the same criteria.

Allow time in-between interviews to discuss first impressions.

Sample Interview Questions can be found on the Internet.

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Select Finalists

- Search Committee recommends finalists to be interviewed by the full Board of Trustees.
- Only refer to the Board those candidates you feel are fully qualified and acceptable if chosen by the Board.
- Suggest interview questions, areas to probe, to the Board.
- Ask Candidates to prepare a 10-15 minute presentation on a set topic.

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Final Steps

- Check references – Plan your questions in advance.
- **Negotiate the initial term of appointment**
 - RSA 202-A:15 (amended 8/19/23) Public Librarian; Qualification and Tenure

"The librarian shall be appointed by the board of library trustees for a term of office agreed to at the time of employment and may serve until a successor is appointed and qualified."

 - Protects the librarian from arbitrary termination.
 - Protects the library from an extended term of unsatisfactory performance.
 - Renewal becomes a mutual decision of the Board and the Librarian.

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Final Steps

Letter of Appointment/Contract for the Library Director

- The letter of appointment/contract should contain:
- Term of appointment (date of hire and length of initial commitment), agreed to by the library director
 - Compensation/salary
 - Basic benefits (health insurance, paid leave) as described in personnel policies
 - Hours of work (# of hours/week)
 - Job description (attachment to letter)

Have an attorney check the letter before finalizing it.

Prepare to welcome your new Director!

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BEST PRACTICES

- Assign a recording secretary to take notes
- Document your activities for future reference
- Conduct a Post Mortem to identify parts of the process that could be improved
- Retain all appropriate records, resumes, etc.

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QUESTIONS



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QUESTIONS? CONTACT US

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