



Proactive Advocacy and Communication for Library Trustees & Staff

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Agenda

- What is library advocacy?
- Proactive advocacy and Reactive advocacy – why it is important to know the difference
- Outward-facing tools and activities
- Inward-facing tools and activities
- Actions to implement at your library
- Q&A

What is Library Advocacy?

Library Advocacy is turning passive support into educated action.

Reactive Advocacy: Responding to a crisis situation

Proactive Advocacy: Laying the groundwork and building the relationships for positive library support year-round

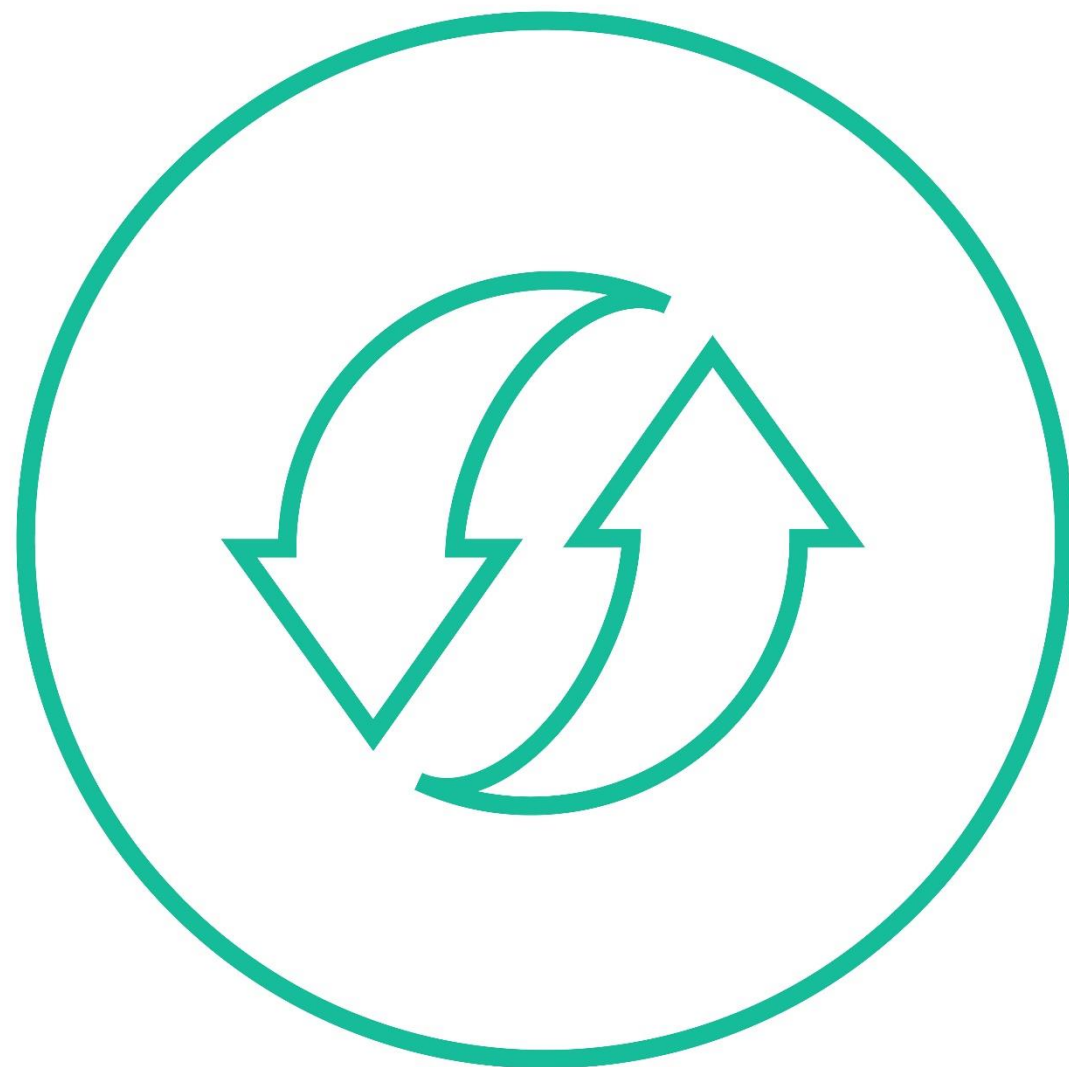


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Inward facing
(Library)



Outward facing
(Community)

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Outward-facing: Community Concerns

**Can your library trustees/staff easily name
the top 3-5 issues facing your town/city/county?**

**Can your library trustees/staff name any specific issues that other
city/town/county departments are facing?**



Outward-facing: Community Concerns

Reactive Advocacy vs. Proactive Advocacy

Example – Review of key governing body minutes

Review of minutes - Reactive

Reviewing the last six months as budget is being drafted

or

Library Trustees telling the director to do this review and report back

Review of minutes - Proactive

Library Trustees review key governing body minutes **every** month

It's an **assigned** task rotated through all members

An individual member provides summary to Board for **discussion**



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Outward-facing: Community Governance

Can your library trustees/staff list three main aspects of your community's governance structure/timeline if asked?

Why is this important??

Outward-facing: Community Governance

- Respect among various stakeholders through **common language**
- Provides a mechanism for directors, Library trustees, and other community leaders for **commonality in function and therefore in relationship**



Outward-facing: Annual Reports

Is last year's annual report a monotonous black and white narrative with a table (or three) of stats thrown in?

Is your PowerPoint presentation to your city council regarding the annual budget a bunch of slides with a lot of words?

Outward-facing: Annual Reports

Stats are important, but be choosy - they should not be the sole focus of an annual report.

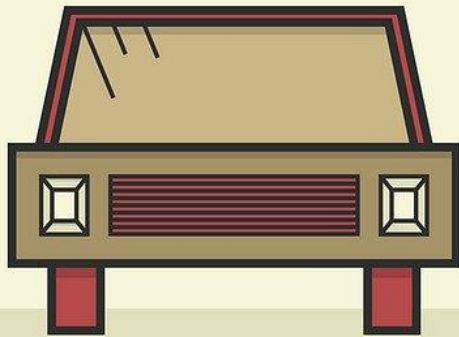
NO ONE WANTS TO SEE ALL OF YOUR STATS!!!!

Example: What were your top 3-5 service priorities?

- How can you demonstrate those priorities with targeted stats? Visuals? Stories?
- **How do these service priorities dovetail with town/community issues?**

June 10-August 3, 2020

CURBSIDE PICK-UP



Remote Services continued

Curbside Service

- ❖ More than 2,600 books, movies, and magazines checked out through more than 675 curbside deliveries
- ❖ Outside wifi and computer access
- ❖ In-person technology help



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Outward-facing: Annual Reports

Brainstorm with staff for stories (use 4 step outline) to incorporate either in the written/verbal narrative or as a visual in the report.

4-Step Story Outline

1. Use a real person (change name if necessary)
2. Present the person's problem (NOT a library problem – emotional hook)
3. Provide library intervention (library in supporting role)
4. Provide ONE library-related fact related to the problem/solution

[Video, ALA: How to Tell a Library Story](#)

[Library Journal article, March 2020: Stats & Stories](#)

Inward-facing: Documenting Stories

- **One story** should be shared at **every** staff meeting and **every** trustee meeting, at least verbally.
- **Write out** one story for each meeting so that every participant goes away with one that they can practice/use



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Inward-facing: Board Calendar

Keep your board and staff on the same page with what's coming up that is important for library budget and governance – create a one-page calendar that is reviewed monthly.

[Sample one-page Trustee calendar from Baker Free Library \(Bow, NH\)](#)

Baker Free Library (Bow, NH)
Board of Trustees Annual Calendar - 2019
Updated: May 8, 2019

<p>JANUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Prepare for Budget Committee meeting ▪ Finalize BFL policy review dates for 2019 ▪ Review annual reports for Town ▪ Discuss trustee election & recruitment (Peirce Hunter) ▪ Filing period 1/23-2/1 ▪ Budget Committee meeting – 1/16/2019 ▪ Monitor SAU, BOS & BC minutes ▪ Trustee = Christine ▪ Trustee monthly meeting Wed 1/9 5:15 pm 	<p>FEBRUARY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Budget Committee Public Hearing – , BMS (snow date ?? same place & time) ▪ Candidates Night – Wed 2/20 at 6:30 pm ▪ Monitor SAU, BOS & BC minutes ▪ Trustee = David ▪ Trustee monthly meeting Wed 2/13, 5:15 pm 	<p>MARCH</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Town Meeting 3/13 @ 6:30 pm BHS – ALL TRUSTEES ▪ Monitor SAU, BOS, BC minutes ▪ Trustee = Marc ▪ Trustee monthly meeting Wed 3/13 5:15 pm
<p>JULY</p> <p>NO REGULAR MONTHLY MEETING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CIP presentation - ?? 	<p>AUGUST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Distribute & Discuss draft budget for library (need all Trustees to attend) ▪ Prepare for budget presentation to Town ▪ Communicate with Foundation about Endowment investment ▪ Monitor BOS, BDC, School Board, & CIPC minutes ▪ Trustee = David ▪ Trustee monthly meeting Wed 8/14 5:15 pm 	<p>SEPTEMBER</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Final review of draft budget & vote to approve (need all Trustees to attend – <u>quorum</u> mandatory) ▪ Begin preparation for Annual Fund with Foundation ▪ Foundation mtg ?? ▪ Monitor BOS & BC minutes ▪ Trustee = Marc ▪ Trustee monthly meeting Wed 9/11 5:15 pm

Inward-facing: Elevator Speech

If your library trustees/staff were asked to quickly state the biggest challenge the library is facing right now, could they answer that question?

Inward-facing: Elevator Speech

An elevator speech can focus on any topic that is the highest concern of the trustees at the moment – it does not have to be just about the vision statement or the mission statement of the library.

Short, one - two sentences, with one statistic.

If they get used to creating the elevator speech as a team during a non-crisis, imagine how awesome they will be during an actual crisis!

Inward-facing: Elevator Speech

Example:

The Baker Free Library's HVAC system uses R-22 for coolant, which has been actively phased out of both production and distribution since 2010. If proactive action is not taken to allocate capital monies to upgrade the HVAC system for other coolant types, the cost for system repairs will likely double the annual budget line for HVAC maintenance in 2020 due to the cost per gallon of R-22 (\$100+ per gallon).

Potential Actions to Implement

- Implement a monthly library trustee review/reporting on county/city/town governance minutes
- Incorporate a monthly library staff review on governance minutes
- Create an annual library trustee calendar that includes important dates for governance, is updated annually, and is reviewed at each trustee meeting



Potential Actions to Implement, continued

- Share at least one library story verbally at staff and trustee meetings
- Write down and share at least one library story at staff and trustee meetings
- Adjust one piece of the library's annual report to reflect a community impact focus with select library statistics that dovetail with community priorities



Q&A



Contact me!

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