**Navigating the library director hiring process: A guide for trustees and boards**

**Learner Guide**

<https://www.webjunction.org/events/webjunction/library-director-hiring-process.html>

Hiring a new library director is the single most important decision of the library board. Finding and retaining a good library director is vital to creating excellent library service for your community. This presentation will provide you with step-by-step instructions for this significant hiring process. From forming a committee to board approval, we'll navigate each crucial step together. Gain invaluable insights on job descriptions, reviewing applications, and conducting interviews. You will learn how avoid common pitfalls and ensure a seamless transition to a new director. Empower your board to make informed decisions and secure the visionary leadership your library deserves.

Presented by: Carol Mikulski, Wallingford Public Library (WPL) Board of Directors

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **What are your goals for viewing this webinar?** | |
| **Personal Goals** |  |
| **Team Goals** |  |
| **Library big picture preparation** | |
| Before launching into the library director hiring process, even before there is an urgent need, it’s important to consider and review your library’s mission and vision statements, as well as long-range plans and short-term goals, to help inform your preparations. Use this time to learn from your current or previous director (remember to conduct an exit interview) to verify alignment with services and programs currently offered to the community. Reflect on/discuss key information or factors in your mission, vision, plans or goals that might influence the director hiring process. | |

|  |
| --- |
| **Assessing current strengths, needs, and improvements** |
| Building on reflections above, now consider shifts in library, staff, and community needs since hiring your last director, and work towards clarifying the skills and attitudes needed to lead your public library today.  Which are areas that the library could improve?  Where would improvements provide the biggest benefits to the community?  Our community would really benefit from:  Current library or library staff strengths that we don't want to ever lose:  Things we would really like to improve:  Questions informed by [Library Director Tool](https://rurallibraries.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Library-Director.pdf) (pdf), [Rural Libraries and Social Wellbeing](https://rurallibraries.org/). |
| **Job description refinement** |
| Keep the above factors in mind as you move on to review and update the current library director job description, noting the qualities to focus on when hiring. Take the following steps:   * Review, clarify or remove any outdated information * Add any new skills and abilities the director should possess * Learn about [gender bias in hiring](https://topechelon.com/blog/gender-biased-language-in-job-descriptions/) and ensure inclusive language is used throughout the description (use a [Gender Decoder](https://gender-decoder.katmatfield.com/) for finding subtle bias in job ads) |
| **Interview questions** |
| Asking the right questions can demonstrate the board’s commitment to finding the right candidate to lead their library. As you determine which questions to ask in your interview, prioritize those questions that will help to surface the most complete and honest assessment of your candidates. Consider those that will most effectively differentiate candidates and confirm alignment with the library’s needs. As was asked in the webinar, think about your favorite interview question and see if it would be good to use with your candidates.  Review [Interview questions](https://www.webjunction.org/content/dam/WebJunction/Documents/webJunction/2024-04/library-director-interview-questions.docx) from WPL (doc) |
| **Action Plan: (include next steps, when, who, etc.)** |
|  |