

A Library Board's Practical Guide to Finding the Right Library Director

Detroit Suburban Librarians' Roundtable Succession Planning Committee

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PREFACE

Futurists predict that 75% to 80% of library professionals will retire within the next five to seven years. This prediction is not without basis. By a show of hands at a recent meeting of the Detroit Suburban Librarians' Roundtable (DSLRT), over 75% of the directors in attendance indicated they would be retiring within that timeframe. Recruitment of library directors throughout the country has become extremely difficult in the past five years.

Recognizing this as a potential crisis, the federal government has committed \$29.7 million to attracting new recruits to the library and information profession. While this should help with the long-term outlook for finding librarians, it will not immediately ease the difficulty of finding qualified candidates for directorships. Due to professionally acknowledged needs for exceptional leadership with political savvy and a proven track record in public library management, as well as finance and HR experience, filling directorship positions will continue to be a challenging process for most library boards.

As library directors concerned with the future of the organizations to which they have devoted most of their professional lives, DSLRT established a committee of five library directors to prepare a guide for library boards to follow when it is time to hire a new director.

INTRODUCTION

This is a how-to manual. It provides suggestions to boards beginning the process of hiring a library director. The manual makes practical suggestions on the following:

- Initiating a planning process
- Assigning responsibilities and tasks
- Examining the use of a consultant
- Advertising the position, and
- Making the final decision

Library boards will find the manual a useful preplanning tool to avoid unnecessary difficulties and find the director who will be a perfect fit for their community.

Hiring a director is the library board's most important duty. It can be a daunting task and all boards want the best library professional to fill their vacancy. While it can be an expensive, multi-faceted project with many choices, it also is an opportunity to infuse the library with new energy, vision, and leadership. There may be a right way for an individual library, but there is no **one** right way for all libraries.

Selecting a library director is a huge responsibility, and the expense of hiring the wrong person or one that proves to be inept can be sizable. Library boards concerned with developing a successful future for their library should have an understanding of the entire process. They will evaluate whether they want to go it alone, involve their current director, involve neighboring directors, or hire a consultant.

Using this guide, library boards may better understand the process, consider the variables, envision their goals, develop a plan, work as a team, and achieve the optimum results for their library.

AVOIDING PITFALLS OF THE PROCESS

When done correctly, the search for a new director can invigorate and energize a library. When needed, this can be an opportunity for rapid change. During the hiring process the library board has an opportunity to take a fresh look at services and to reflect on the library's future direction. The process can be arduous and full of pitfalls that should be avoided. This list of "do nots" should be discussed and considered.

- Hiring to the weaknesses or strengths of the former director – Evaluate each candidate on his/her own merit. Each person has strengths and weaknesses and finding a comfortable balance of skills and attitudes is essential.
- Rushing to resolution – Recognizing the importance of having a director in place, a board may hastily make a hiring decision and not reflect on the qualities and vision they need in a new director.
- Taking the easy way out – Reviewing applicants for a library directorship is a lot of work and takes time. Boards should not take the easy way out and promote an internal candidate without going through the complete search process. Internal candidates should be evaluated as thoroughly as external candidates.
- Assuming that all assistant directors are qualified to be directors – There is a vast difference between being an assistant director under a competent library director and being the library director. Evaluate each candidate for the range and depth of experience but also consider personality, work ethic, and commitment.
- Being penny-wise and pound foolish – This is not the time to be frugal. Taking time, using a consultant, and offering a good compensation package will help attract the best candidates available.
- Assuming all candidates are 100% candid – Sometimes candidates inflate their abilities and achievements. A thorough reference and background check should be conducted. Attention should be paid to both what is said and not said during reference checks.
- Putting too much emphasis on technical abilities – A library director should be more than a good librarian. Great library directors are visionary leaders that communicate well with the board, staff, and community leaders.

HAVING AN INTERIM PLAN

In the event that the directorship becomes vacant without prior notice, the library board should have a continuation plan in place to assure the smooth operation of the library. An interim plan will allow the board to proceed with detailed succession planning in a thorough and orderly manner, with the knowledge that the library is continuing to operate as usual.

Developing the interim plan is the shared responsibility of the current director and board. Boards, of even the smallest library, need to think in terms of how the library would operate if the director were suddenly unable to come to work. The plan can be relatively simple, but should answer the following questions:

- Who will serve as a temporary director?
- Who are the members of the management team and what are their areas of responsibility?
- Who can authorize payment of salaries and bills?
- What is the role of the board during this time?

Board trustees should know the details of the interim plan and have confidence in abilities of a temporary director and the management team to respond with immediacy in a calm manner. Libraries should be well organized enough to operate for a few days until the board can meet and formally name an interim director who will oversee library operations while the search is underway for a new director.

GETTING THE PROCESS STARTED

1. Brainstorming session

When the board first learns the director is leaving, a brainstorming session to decide how to proceed should be scheduled. This is an opportunity to move the library forward and possibly make significant changes in the way the library operates. The board should be prepared to spend a good amount of time evaluating their situation.

The following are just a few typical questions to consider:

- Is the board satisfied with the library and the direction it has taken under the previous director or is it time for a new approach?

- Are there area libraries that offer different models of service to emulate?
- What special strengths or qualifications should a new library director possess to be successful in the community? For example, is experience with unions, construction projects or special political acumen needed?
- Has there been a succession plan in place that offers assurance of internal applicant's qualifications?
- Should the board consider a national search or are there strong candidates in state to consider?
- Should a library consultant be hired to conduct the search?

2. Exit interview

It is recommended that the board conduct an exit interview with the departing director, possibly in closed session, and use it as a learning experience before moving forward. Sample discussion topics might be:

- How was the board/director relationship? How could it be improved?
- What did the director like most/least about the job?
- What issues should the board be addressing in the near future?
- Is there anything unique about the staff to share with a successor?
- Are there inside candidates who should be considered? What are their strengths/weaknesses?
- Is there any parting advice to offer before leaving?

GOING FORWARD WITH THE PROCESS

Allow sufficient time to make a thoughtful decision. A 15-week timeline is considered fast. The average board takes about 27 weeks to replace a library director.

The following items provide a comprehensive list of components that might be included as part of the process, with or without a consultant:

- Appointing an interim director to administer the library during the transition period. The interim director may be a current library employee; however, the board might want to consider someone from outside. An excellent article, "The Case for the Outside

Interim," can be found in the bibliography at the conclusion of this guide.

- Determining the advisability of hiring a consultant to assist with the search for a new director
- Conducting a visioning session for board, key staff, and possibly members of the public
- Preparing a job posting
- Advertising the position
- Reviewing applications
- Interviewing candidates
- Deliberating after the interviews
- Checking candidate references
- Offering and negotiating the position with the preferred candidate
- Reviewing the contract (if applicable)
- Developing a plan to introduce the new director to key community leaders, the staff, and the public
- Planning a welcome reception

DECIDING WHETHER OR NOT TO USE A CONSULTANT

Beginning the process **with** a consultant

Depending on the size of the library and the scope of the search, a board may choose to use a library consultant to assist in the hiring of a new director. A consultant may charge from \$5,000 to over \$25,000. The board may contact their regional library system, network or cooperative, the state library, a state library association or the American Library Association (ALA) to obtain a list of consultants to assist in the search. The decision to use or not use a consultant is purely a local one, but there are several points to consider.

Experienced consultants, familiar with the library personnel market, can expedite the selection and hiring process and can ease the library board's workload. Care must be taken to clearly define the scope of work the library board expects the consultant to complete.

Boards should be aware that consultants can be more successful at getting reliable (more candid) references on candidates through the use of personal and professional connections. Because they have ushered so many boards through the hiring process, consultants tend to be more

knowledgeable about the legalities involved as well.

Their experience helps them guide the library board by:

- Knowing how to ask the appropriate questions
- Being aware of relevant laws such as sunshine /open meeting laws
- Making use of the consultant's local and national connections to recruit and screen candidates
- Using the consultant's experience to speed up the process
- Providing an unbiased outsider for meeting facilitation

Depending on the contract, a consultant could undertake the following:

- Visit the library and meet with staff, unions, community groups and board to prepare a needs analysis
- Develop an accurate job description based on the needs analysis
- Create and distribute the job posting
- Assist in recruitment by preparing promotional material about the job and community
- Prepare interview questions
- Conduct phone interviews
- Facilitate in-person interviews
- Work with the board to evaluate applications based on criteria developed in the needs assessment process. Depending on board needs, the consultant could do one of the following:
 - Submit a complete list of all applications
 - Submit a short list of potential candidates
 - Present a top candidate
- Orchestrate multi-day visits for the candidates to the library and community
- Check references from the candidates' resumes and through the consultant's contacts
- Negotiate a contract between the library and candidate (if applicable)

Beginning the process **without** a consultant

While a consultant may facilitate the process, there is no requirement to use his/her services. The board may decide they need a consultant to

guide them through the entire process, or the board may elect to limit the consultant's involvement to key tasks.

A library board can conduct the search on their own by forming a search committee. The advantage to the do-it-yourself process is that consultant's fees are avoided and the library board will have full ownership of the process. This is particularly true when several board members are experienced with the recruiting process for executive positions. Boards that do not have members with expertise at hiring for administrative and executive positions will want to carefully consider the potential pitfalls and consider their responsibility for due diligence to their communities.

Hiring a new library director requires a significant time commitment on the part of the search committee. The tasks for replacing a library director should be the same whether a consultant is used or not, so the search committee must be realistic about sharing the necessary tasks and committing to the process in a timely manner.

With these caveats in mind, it is perfectly possible for a skilled board to locate and hire a suitable candidate without the use of a consultant.

Continuing the process

1. Budget

The board must prepare a budget for the replacement process. Fees will vary by the scope of the search (national vs. regional vs. local). Boards should expect to pay:

- Advertising rates: \$2,000 - \$10,000
- Travel reimbursement for out-of-state candidates: \$1,000 - \$1,500 per candidate to be interviewed
- Meal and lodging expenses for out-of-state candidates or for local candidates if a meal is part of the interview process: \$100 - \$200 per candidate
- Moving expenses: vary greatly, but could be in a range of \$3,000 to \$5,000
- Reception expenses for the newly hired director: \$200+

2. Legalities

The hiring of a new library director is a public task. Library boards should be particularly aware of:

- The impact of the Open Meetings Act on the hiring process

- Local personnel policies regarding the advertising of positions
- State and local laws regarding residency requirements
- Illegal interview questions
- State requirements regarding certification of library directors

3. Salary and benefits

Finding and hiring the right library director is the key to the library's success; therefore the job posting must be attractive enough to entice high quality candidates. Salary and benefits should be competitive with area libraries of like size. Use regional library salary surveys, if available. Unfortunately, published salary surveys are often unreliable due to varied reporting methodologies and time lags in publishing dates. Salaries vary greatly from one part of the country to another and often from one part of a state to another. It may be preferable to talk with area directors to determine a competitive employment package.

Posting a salary range (rather than a fixed salary) and being willing to negotiate salary and benefits demonstrates a board's flexibility to highly qualified candidates. If a candidate fits the library's needs, but he or she is hesitating due to the salary or benefit package, one strategy to land the desirable candidate may be to offer a signing bonus or end-of-year bonus. It is a false economic savings to hire someone who is not capable because he or she will work for a low salary. This is not the time to be "pennywise and pound foolish." It is well worth the investment to hire the correct director the first time. The new library director will make decisions that have a significant impact on the quality of library services and the financial future of the library. It is the board's responsibility to make sure to have the best person possible making those decisions.

The initial salary negotiation between the board and the director will lay the groundwork for the working relationship that is to come. If the initial offer is overly generous, it can lead to unreasonable expectations and mutual frustration in the future. On the other hand, it will be difficult to develop a relationship of mutual trust if either party feels undervalued or unfairness has occurred.

4. Selling the position and the community

In order to attract a professionally qualified and diverse array of candidates, a position posting for library director should include a description of the community as well as a description of any special skills

the candidate will need. A well-written summary will act as a snapshot from which a candidate can envision his/her place within the community.

The description of the community could include the following:

- Demographics of the community
- Industrial/business makeup
- Cultural and educational institutions and opportunities
- Civic organizations which the candidate is expected to join

In the job description, the board should accurately state their expectations for the director with reference to community involvement, fund-raising and long-range planning. A sample job description will be found at the end of this guide.

Boards should make a point to portray the community in as positive a light as possible without being deceptive. Eligible candidates should feel and express a desire to become part of the overall picture portrayed by the description.

5: Advertising and posting the job

Sample job postings will be found in the Appendices of this guide. The job notice should be written with various advertising sources in mind. The creation and distribution of a job posting are essential to attracting a large pool of desirable candidates. Generally, the job posting should be a concise, yet thorough summary of:

- Professional duties and responsibilities
- Educational credential requirements
- Desired strengths, skills and characteristics
- Expected community commitments
- Positive library and community attributes
- All salary, benefit and compensation packages
- The where and when for candidate response

Once the posting is prepared, it needs to be widely distributed. Newspaper classified advertisements vary in cost per line and in markets reached. Some common public library distribution points are:

- Posting online on:

- The library's web site
- Statewide library listservs
- PUBLIB listserv
- Professional Journals –a list of popular journals and contact information will be found at the end of this guide
- Library cooperatives, systems or networks

6. Search Scope

- A. National** - A national search may include advertisements placed in print and/or online with *Library Journal*, *ALA Hotline*, *American Libraries*, *The Wall Street Journal*. Recruitment strategies can be devised for the annual and semi-annual conferences of professional organizations - ALA, PLA, and state library associations. Some larger libraries send out attractive, upscale brochures to help sell their communities and libraries.

There are several national resources that are commonly used to advertise library positions. The costs and lead times will vary, but if you are doing a national search you should consider advertising in one or more of these places.

- **American Library Association - Hot Jobs Online** c/o American Libraries Magazine
www.ala.org/ala/education/empopps/careerleadsb/careerleadsonline. e-mail: careerleads@ala.org Fax (312) 944-8541 or (312) 440-0901
www.ala.org/ala/education/empopps/employmentopportunities
 Career Leads from American Libraries, ALA Placement Services
- **Library Journal/ School Library Journal and LJ Hotline**
www.libraryjournal.com. Rate information is available on the *Library Journal* website.
- **Library Job Postings on the Internet** www.libraryjobpostings.org
- **Information Media** - www.informationmediajobs.com
- **Posting position openings with ALA accredited**
<http://www.ala.org/ala/accreditation/lisdirb/lisdirectory.htm#us>
 library school recruitment/placement offices can also be

considered as well as other ALA accredited library schools throughout the nation.

- B. Local - A search for local candidates may be launched through the print and online newsletter of the regional library cooperative, network or system as well as through major local and county-wide newspapers. In addition it should be posted internally.

In addition to broadcasting the posting online and through regional and national professional publications, the library board might want to consider targeting certain individuals recommended by the previous director, cooperative or system directors, neighboring libraries, etc.

SELECTING THE CANDIDATE

1. Basic qualities

Regardless of the library's size, there are five basic characteristics that should be evident in a good library director:

- Common sense – This characteristic is often overlooked and yet is absolutely essential to good leadership. Common sense plays a critical part in policy development and implementation. It determines whether a person is rigid or flexible in library operations and can successfully manage the day-to-day running of the library.
- Decision-making ability – The person should be self-confident enough to make tough, informed decisions independently and on the spot
- People skills – Communication skills, fairness, friendliness, empathy, sense of humor and, most significantly, being customer focused are all essential.
- Vision – A good director has the ability to scan the environment in the library profession and the world at large to see how change and innovation might improve library service in the community and to spot opportunities to move the library toward with a commitment to excellence.
- Integrity – The individual must demonstrate a commitment to ethical behavior and to the core values of the library profession.

In addition to the above listed characteristics, a good director will have the following skills:

- Financial management skills to develop, implement, and stay within a budget
- Human resources skills that show the ability to hire, fire, and manage people effectively
- Organizational skills and the ability to multi-task

2. Checking References

Do not neglect this critical task. Some groups check references before any interviews are granted. Others wait until a preliminary decision on a candidate is reached. Do not limit checking references to names given by the candidate. Search out others, including employees the candidate has supervised as well as the candidate's past and present supervisors.

Obtain any requisite permission from applicants to conduct reference checks. Be aware of discrimination laws when probing for information and be sure all information is kept confidential, sharing information with the committee and/or consultant only. Some considerations include:

- Ask about quality and volume of work, specific areas of competence, management style, relationships with the board and staff, and the candidate's ability to function in stressful situations
- Capture words and feelings with notes during the conversations (but do not distribute these to others)
- Listen to what is said as well as what is not said
- Consider the currency of the information
- Double-check any overly negative responses

3. Screen, interview and evaluate

The board has a variety of options when it comes to this process. The interview team may consist strictly of library board members or can be broadened to include staff, area library directors, and community members. If a consultant is used, that person might be a full member of the interview team or might serve as a facilitator. Parts of this process may be covered by the Open Meetings Act. Boards should check with their attorney for local interpretation.

Even if an internal candidate has been groomed through succession planning to assume the directorship, the board needs to interview a rich

pool of applicants, thus maintaining the validity of the process. Whether internal or external, the candidate who emerges from competition will be in a stronger position to lead.

For most boards the interview process will be two steps: screening and interviewing, with the goal being to determine the following three things:

- Can the candidate do the job?
- Will the candidate do the job?
- Does the candidate's style match well with the library's environment?

STEP ONE: Screening applications

The screening portion of the process will be used to develop a short list of candidates to be interviewed. The board needs to determine the makeup of this team. The screening team does not necessarily need to be composed of decision-makers only. The board may choose to broaden the team to include the following:

- One or two key staff members
- An area library director
- A human resources professional
- Community leaders

Part of the screening process may include phone interviews and, with permission of the candidate, preliminary reference checks.

STEP TWO: Interviewing

This is the time for the board to get to know the candidates better and for the candidates to learn more about the library and community. The director will represent the library to the community and there needs to be a comfortable fit. Packets of information and an overview of the area should be provided to all candidates before the second round of interviews.

Just as you are trying to gather valid information about the interviewee, be candid in the information supplied to potential applicants. It is never advisable to hide a contentious situation. If there are problematic conditions that will be inherited, be forthright with the information. The successful board/director relationship is one of trust and honesty and this is the first step in building that relationship.

Questions should be developed to help determine the candidates' competencies regarding the following:

- Strategic thinking
- Dealing with stress
- Customer service attitude
- Workplace politics
- Cultural sensitivity
- Problem solving
- Multi-tasking abilities

Suggested interview questions need to be phrased so that candidates talk about real experiences. A list of suggested questions can be found at the conclusion of this guide.

STEP THREE: Evaluating

A consistent rating process should be in place. Numerical ratings are not intended to be the basis for hiring, but comparisons that a numbered chart provides can help make the evaluation process more objective for the entire group of interviewers.

COMPLETING THE PROCESS

After the preceding process steps are completed, the board makes the decision to hire and submits a conditional offer contingent upon background checks. The initial offer may be made verbally by the library board or designated consultant. The offer should contain the actual salary and benefit package, start date, and any other specifics such as signing bonus, moving cost compensation and form of acceptance expected from the candidate.

Once a conditional offer has been accepted by the candidate, then it is time to do a criminal background check. A release form needs to be signed by the candidate allowing permission for a complete background check. While the cost may range from \$1200 to \$1500 or more, it is crucial that there is full disclosure of any past problems. It is a small amount of money to spend when this person will be in charge of all of the library's resources.

The final offer should be formalized in writing and presented to the candidate after the background check. The candidate should write the

library board formally accepting the position and re-confirming the start date.

Do not hesitate to reopen the search if current candidates do not meet the qualifications in any capacity. The position is too important to settle for second best.

Good luck in your search.

Appendices

SAMPLE JOB DESCRIPTION

The Director serves as the chief executive officer of the library and is responsible for the administration of all library functions within the goals, guidelines, and policies established by the Library Board of Trustees. This responsibility includes the organization and dissemination of information and services through the effective utilization of library resources. The director is also responsible for the facilities, financial management, and personnel of the library, under the governance and oversight of the board.

The Director is expected to provide a leadership role within the library, the community, and the library profession. The Director serves as the official representative of the library.

AREAS OF RESPONSIBILITY:

1. General Administration and Management
 - A. Formulates and recommends policies to the library board
 - B. Implements library policies and procedures
 - C. Submits an annual budget to the library board in a timely way and directs and monitors expenditures
 - D. Provides monthly financial planning data to the library board to assist in establishing long and short-term financial priorities
 - E. Looks for new revenue sources, collaborations with other organizations, and profit-centered approaches to services with the business community
 - F. Orients new trustees and serves as a resource for trustee activities
 - G. Employs management techniques effectively in directing, planning, organizing, staffing, coordinating, budgeting, and evaluating the library's operation
 - H. Directs the maintenance of the library building and grounds and recommends future space needs
 - I. Establishes and maintains a staff manual of library procedures
 - J. Demonstrates leadership within the organization: Takes initiative, solves problems, effects change through the action of others, and encourages the development of other staff through a positive work environment

2. Planning, Organization, and Evaluation

- A. Plans, organizes, coordinates, and directs a balanced program of library service to meet the immediate and long-range goals of the library and the community
- B. Identifies the standards of excellence for all operations
- C. Evaluates the effectiveness of library services in relation to the changing needs of the community
- D. Provides for critical review of internal library operations such as acquisitions, circulation, etc.
- E. Analyzes data affecting the library's operation such as legal, physical, and statistical factors
- F. Investigates new trends and specific library programs and facilitates testing of new techniques, materials, and equipment to improve the operation of the library

3. Personnel Management

- A. Develops staff job descriptions, recommends and administers personnel policies
- B. Hires, evaluates, promotes and terminates staff (except when library board consultation is required)
- C. Defines expectations for staff performance and sets goals for service and programming
- D. Works to promote high staff morale
- E. Supervises planning for optimum utilization of personnel
- F. Provides in-service programs for employee training and development, encouraging staff input
- G. Encourages staff professional growth at all levels by supporting participation in professional associations, workshops, seminars, and activities
- H. Ensures that staff performance appraisals are done on a regular schedule
- I. Acts as a consultant, mediator, and facilitator for staff

4. Community and Professional Development

- A. Recommends and administers public relations programs
- B. Represents the library and speaks before community, civic, and other groups regarding the objectives and activities of the library
- C. Establishes and maintains effective working relationships with other governmental agencies, civic and community groups, and the general public
- D. Serves as official representative of the library in actions that legally bind or politically influence the library

- E. Serves as a model to staff in the sense of professionalism, demonstrating strong professional ethics and keeping informed through professional literature
- F. Supports and facilitates the work of the Friends of the Library
- G. Attends professional and other meetings to maintain contact with other professional and library-related agencies
- H. Participates in professional development opportunities to enhance managerial skills and maintains an awareness of new trends and developments in the library field

5. Other duties as required

DESIRED QUALIFICATIONS

- 1. A Master's degree in library science from an ALA accredited school
- 2. Professional certification in compliance with state law
- 3. Eight years of library experience preferred with a minimum of 4 years administrative experience
- 4. Thorough knowledge of the philosophy and techniques of all facets of public library service
- 5. Ability to think analytically and to develop new services
- 6. Ability to exercise initiative and independent judgment
- 7. Considerable knowledge of computers and data communications especially in regards to library applications
- 8. Ability to prepare comprehensive reports and present ideas clearly and concisely in written and oral form
- 9. Highly developed verbal and written communication skills, social skills, and adaptability
- 10. Ability to make administrative decisions, develop policies and supervise staff
- 11. Effective interpersonal skills consisting of creative and diplomatic management abilities
- 12. Demonstrated dynamic motivational leadership skills
- 13. Ability to process information effectively to learn new materials, handle complex concepts, and consider issues macrocosmically
- 14. Ability to motivate, establish and maintain effective working relationships with associates, supervisors, volunteers, other community agencies, governmental bodies and the general public
- 15. Visionary regarding library trends, the impact of changing information technology, and the amount of acceptable risk the board is willing to take in implementing new ideas
- 16. A desire to meet and serve the public

CRITICAL MENTAL REQUIREMENTS

Continuously:

- Is consistently accurate
- Uses good organizational skills at all times
- Maintains absolute confidentiality of library records and administrative matters

Frequently:

- Acts independently and assumes responsibility
- Works effectively with associates, supervisors, and customers
- Is flexible, works well under short time constraints, and meets deadlines
- Makes sound administrative decisions and judiciously interprets and applies policies.
- Interacts positively with co-workers and supervisors, and the public.

CRITICAL PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS

Continuously: Observing and analyzing

Frequently: Keyboarding or handwriting to complete forms

Occasionally: Walking, sitting

SAMPLE JOB POSTING

Public Library Director Position Melvil Dewey Public Library

- Can you take to new heights the public library system with the nation's largest circulation?
- Do you have the skills and knowledge to lead one of the three independently operated library systems serving this major city?
- Are you able to enhance a successful tradition of high level services responsive to a very diverse multilingual and multicultural community?
- Can you administer complex capital improvement programs?
- Are you able to continue advancing MDPL service and support technologies?
- Do you have a demonstrated record of working well with a board of trustees, community groups, and staff?
- Can you work successfully with key city officials, the state, and the United States?
- Are you ready for the greatest professional opportunity of your career?

The Melvil Dewey Public Library serves 2,000,000 people in an ethnically diverse urban area in the United States. The system has a main library, 50 branches, two adult learning centers, 1,600 employees, and annual budget of about \$90 million. In FY 2003, nearly 15 million items were circulated from a collection of over 9.7 million items. Over 22,000 free programs were attended by nearly one-half million people in FY 2003.

The director reports to a 19-member board of trustees appointed by the Mayor. The city council provides the majority of the library's funds (86%). State (7%) and federal (2%) funds also provide substantial support to the library, as well as do grants and library foundation gifts.

The board of trustees is prepared to offer a highly competitive, individualized compensation package. Prior to appointment, the successful candidate must meet the minimum state requirements for library director, including holding a public librarian's professional certificate (which requires a Master's Degree from an ALA-accredited program). Also required are eight or more full years of professional library

experience in libraries or systems of libraries of recognized standing satisfactory to the commissioner, at least two years of which shall have been in an administrative capacity.

A letter of interest and resume should be sent to Library Board President,
Melvil Dewey Public Library, 100 Main Street, Hometown, USA

The board of trustees will be reviewing applications and candidates until a director is selected. Resumes received by June 18, 2005 will receive first consideration.

The Melvil Dewey Public Library is an Equal Opportunity Employer.

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Director

Charles Cutter Public Library

A new way of thinking. The Board of Trustees is seeking a dynamic leader to continue to transform the Library's facilities and culture and to champion the evolving and increasingly important role of the Library in the region.

As part of a comprehensive capital improvement program, the Library has recently renovated branches and the First Floor of the Main Library, and relocated branches. These projects used information architecture to integrate the customer with systems, staff, and facilities to create extraordinary buildings that are becoming destinations. The new Director will ensure the completion of the capital improvement program through fundraising, friend raising, and political/community linkages.

A new culture has been forged that makes the customer the priority in library design considerations, lexicon, policies, and procedures. The staff has become empowered to take action to improve library services for its users and the new Director will build on this spirit of accountability.

Qualifications include extensive experience leading a large, complex organization through times of change. Resource management is an imperative, including managing large budgets and raising new revenues through fundraising or other creative means. Background in strategic planning, public policy development and advocacy are highly desired. The Director should possess the personal qualities of integrity, energy, an

entrepreneurial spirit, a sense of humor, positive attitude, enthusiasm, ambition, compassion, strength, drive, confidence, humility, a high tolerance for ambiguity, and a genuine interest in people. An appreciation of the role of libraries in a democratic society is imperative.

This position will provide the right professional with the opportunity to lead one of the Pittsburgh region's most honored and treasured institutional resources and - as a prominent member of the region's civic leadership ranks - to interact regularly with private, public, and civic sector peers in charting the course for western Pennsylvania's economic and social success.

Charles Cutter Public Library has 19 neighborhood locations, a Main Library, a regional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped and serves as a statewide resource library and a district center for local libraries. The Library employs 360 and its annual budget is over \$20 million.

Salary is negotiable and commensurate with qualifications. Charles Cutter Public Library is an equal opportunity/affirmative action employer. Interested individuals should electronically submit an application letter and resume to executive search consultant:

Library Search Associates
100 Main Street
Downtown, New York

Additional information about the organization can be found on the library's website.

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DIRECTOR

River City Public Library

The River City Public Library, located in River City, Iowa, serves the county area through main library, branch libraries and a staff of 76 full and part-time employees. Population: 66,000; budget: 3.1 million; circulation 864,000; and collection: 286,000 items. The River City Public Library has a long history of providing high quality traditional and innovative library services and has a world famous sheet music collection. The successful candidate will possess strong written and oral communication skills, the ability to relate well to the public and library staff, possesses good

organizational skills, and be progressive. The director will be required to promote public relations and outreach, staff development and team building, and provide ongoing facility and service evaluations.

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS: ALA-accredited MLS with appropriate undergraduate degree a plus. Minimum of six years professional public library experience with at least three in administration. Business orientation or background is desired. Salary: \$70,000 - \$90,000 depending on qualifications.

Position remains open until filled. Screening of applications begins January 15, 2005. Send resume and letter of interest to: Marian Paroo, Board President, **River City Public Library**, 100 Main Street, River City, Iowa.

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DIRECTOR

Ben Franklin Public Library

Reports to and works closely with county council-appointed board of 9 trustees, county government officials and service-driven staff. **MINIMUM EDUCATION/EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS:** MLS from ALA-accredited program, with preferably 1-2 years of progressively-responsible professional (post-MLS) experience with some supervisory/managerial experience desirable. Though candidates with professional experience or experience in a public library are given priority, applications also accepted from beginning librarians with an MLS. Must have driver's license and meet eligibility requirements for professional certification with the state of Pennsylvania. Hiring salary dependent upon qualifications and type, amount and appropriateness of experience. Submit resume and letter requesting application form to: **Interim Director, Ben Franklin Public Library, 100 Main Street, Philadelphia, PA.**

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LIBRARY DIRECTOR
Madras Public Library

A regional library located in the town of Madras, which is located in southeastern India. This library serves a population of 40,000. The library has a collection of 92,000 items and an annual circulation of over 205,000 items. There are 10 full-time equivalent employees. The library's budget for FY05 is \$679,389. *THE DIRECTOR IS RESPONSIBLE FOR* administration of all aspects of library services and is subject to direction by the board of library trustees. The director will work assertively with library, town agencies, and community groups to promote library/community relations and to formulate budgets and oversee the 140,000-sq.-ft. physical structure. Applicants should be energetic leaders with a strong commitment to public service. The candidate will be an excellent communicator with strong written and verbal communication skills and have an open-door policy for both staff and patrons. Applicants should be familiar with current library technology and electronic and Internet technologies; be willing to participate in evening activities; be knowledgeable about long-range planning and grant procedures; and be versed in traditional library skills. *QUALIFICATIONS:* MLS from an ALA-accredited program plus 6 years of progressively responsible experience in a public library, including at least 3 in a supervisory position, and certification from the Indian Board of Library Commissioners. Salary: High-\$50s plus benefits. **Closing date: Jan. 15.** Qualified professionals should send a cover letter and resume, including 3 references, to: **Shiyali Ranganatha, Madras Public Library, 1892 Main Street, Madras, India**

SAMPLE INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interviewers should explain the interview process to the candidate at the initial meeting

1. What appealed to you about this position when you saw it advertised?
2. Briefly summarize your professional background as a library administrator.
3. Describe some of your past public speaking experiences.
4. How do you keep up with what is hot in the library world?
5. What are three of the most important issues facing public libraries today?
6. What do you see as the primary role for the library? How would you proceed to develop a vision and mission for the future and then communicate that vision?
7. What experience have you had introducing new technologies?
8. What services should a public library cooperative, system or network provide to its member libraries?

Management Style

1. How would you describe your management style?
2. What experience do you have with a unionized workforce?
3. What experience have you had working with municipal governing bodies?
4. Please identify potential revenue sources for public libraries.
5. What experience do you have preparing and administering a budget?
6. What experience do you have in strategic planning? What methodology was the most successful and why?
7. What techniques would you use to improve employee morale?

8. What kind of partnerships and/or collaborations do you see as advantageous for a public library to establish within a community?
9. How would you deal with a staff member who is not complying with library policy?
10. How would you deal with a board member that does not publicly support library policy?
11. How would you determine staffing needs for services offered by the library?
12. We have a multi-tiered workforce. How would you improve communication between employees, administration, and the board?
13. Tell us about the most difficult personnel problem that you have had to deal with. How did you handle it? How was it resolved?
14. How could the library encourage better understanding of a diverse workforce and clientele?
15. Describe how do you manage employee performance evaluations.

Customer Service

1. What are some of the unique service populations that the library can serve and how can that service be provided?
2. What techniques would you use to evaluate service quality and customer satisfaction with services provided?
3. How would you ensure that the library's customer service standards are practiced by all employees?
4. How would you deal with an irate customer that comes to you complaining about poor service he/she just received?
5. An eight year old is using an Internet terminal. As you walk by you realize that he is logged into the Playboy site. What would you do?
6. A customer complains about offensive material and demands that it be removed from the library's collection. What do you say to the customer?
7. If you heard a staff member giving out incorrect information to a customer what would you do?

Summarization

1. If you were offered this position, what would be your top three priorities and how would you determine them?
2. Why should we hire you?

Behavior based interview questions

Tell us about a time when you...

1. Worked effectively under pressure
2. Anticipated potential problems and developed preventive measures
3. Were forced to make an unpopular decision
4. Used your political savvy to push through a program that you really believed in
5. Had to deal with an irate citizen
6. Hired (or fired) the wrong person
7. Had to adapt to a difficult situation
8. Surmounted a major obstacle
9. Worked in an environment of multiculturalism, describing the project or example whereby you worked with people who did not look like you
10. Made a bad decision, describing how you minimized the damage and what you would do differently next time
11. Simultaneously managed multiple people and their varied activities describing the number of people involved and what they did.

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