

# Guiding your Library's

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STRATEGIES FOR HIRING AND  
EVALUATING A DIRECTOR

# Future

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**MAURA DEEDY**  
**(SHE | HERS)**

Principal  
Local Librarian Consulting

March 23, 2024

NEW LIBRARY TRUSTEE VIRTUAL ORIENTATION  
PRESENTED FOR THE NEW JERSEY STATE LIBRARY

# Today's Agenda

## WHAT WE'LL LEARN:

Library Director Timeline, including:

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Search and Selection of a New Library  
Director

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Onboarding

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Evaluation

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Dismissing a Library Director

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Questions

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# About Maura (she | hers)

FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL OF  
LOCAL LIBRARIAN CONSULTING

Policy Wonk Extraordinaire

former Library Advisory  
Specialist, Massachusetts Board  
of Library Commissioners

United for Libraries Board  
member-at-large

Deep background in library governance,  
intellectual freedom, policy and procedures

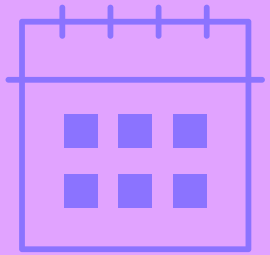
Experience in consulting for and educating  
advisory and governing Boards of Trustees,  
Friends and Foundations

Knowledge of the application of state and  
federal laws and regulations applicable to  
public libraries in Massachusetts



**One of the Board's most important responsibilities is to hire a capable and competent library director.**

**New Jersey Trustee Handbook**



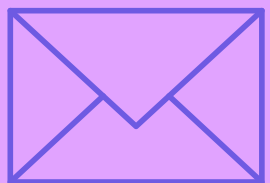
## Appoint or Hire an Acting Director

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Interim or acting Library Director will perform essential duties before and during the search

Internal: Assistant Library Director or Senior Manager

External: Experienced Library Director



## Clear and timely communications

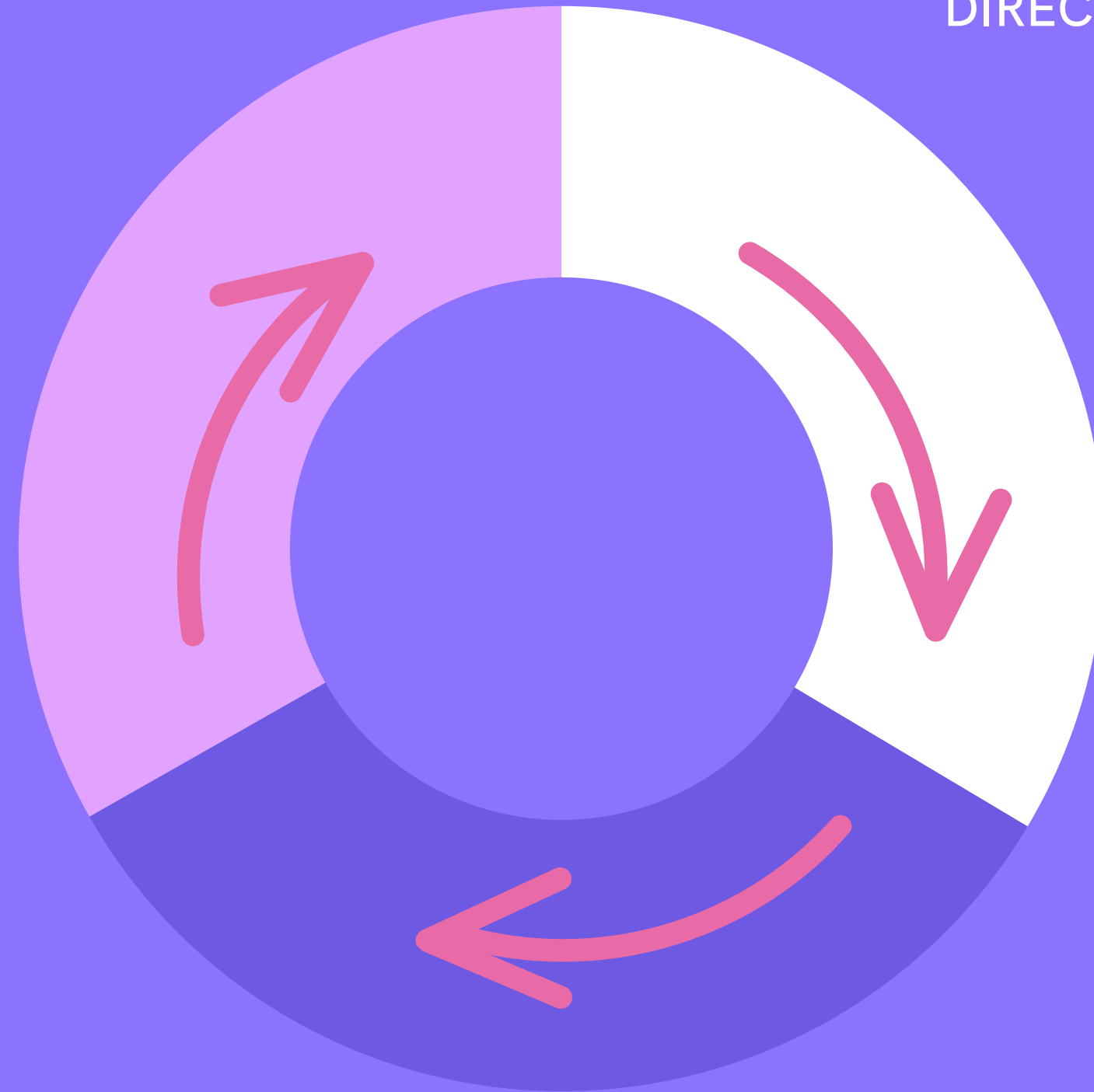
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Starting with departure announcement to appointment, and everything in between for staff, municipal stakeholders, Friends/Foundation

# Library Director Cycle

SEARCH + SELECTION  
OF A NEW LIBRARY  
DIRECTOR

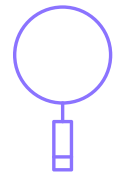
EVALUATION  
(ongoing)



ONBOARDING

# SEARCH + SELECTION OF A NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR

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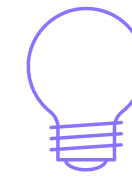
PREPARE JOB  
DESCRIPTION



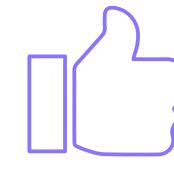
BUDGET



SEARCH  
COMMITTEE



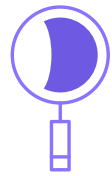
BOARD  
INTERVIEWS



SELECT NEW  
DIRECTOR

# SEARCH + SELECTION OF A NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR

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## PREPARE JOB DESCRIPTION

What does the future look like?  
What does the future need?

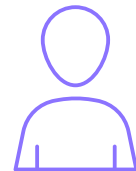
Staff input

Administrative work + planning

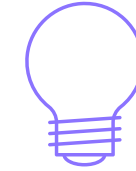
Diverse recruitment



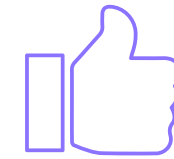
## BUDGET



## SEARCH COMMITTEE



## BOARD INTERVIEWS

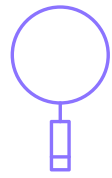


## SELECT NEW DIRECTOR



# SEARCH + SELECTION OF A NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR

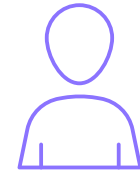
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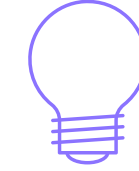
PREPARE JOB  
DESCRIPTION



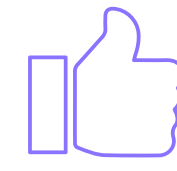
**BUDGET**



SEARCH  
COMMITTEE



BOARD  
INTERVIEWS



SELECT NEW  
DIRECTOR

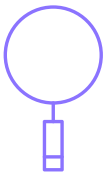
Salary and Range of benefits

Budget for hiring process:

- Acting Directors stipend
- Travel for candidates
- Advertisements
- Consultant

# SEARCH + SELECTION OF A NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR

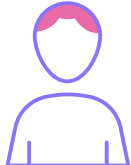
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PREPARE JOB  
DESCRIPTION



BUDGET

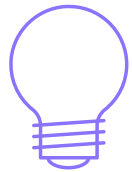


**SEARCH  
COMMITTEE**

Trustees, staff, stakeholders to screen candidates make recommendations for finalists

Establish review criteria + consistent treatment of candidates

Virtual interview over 1-2 rounds



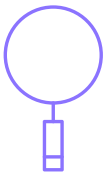
BOARD  
INTERVIEWS



SELECT NEW  
DIRECTOR

# SEARCH + SELECTION OF A NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR

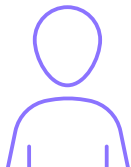
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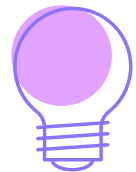
PREPARE JOB  
DESCRIPTION



BUDGET



SEARCH  
COMMITTEE



BOARD  
INTERVIEWS



SELECT NEW  
DIRECTOR

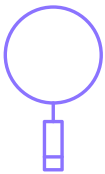
Final candidates interview with entire board

Staff and/or stakeholders may be invited

Agenda for the interviewing process

# SEARCH + SELECTION OF A NEW LIBRARY DIRECTOR

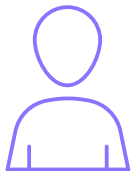
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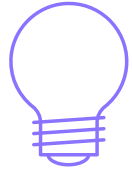
PREPARE JOB  
DESCRIPTION



BUDGET



SEARCH  
COMMITTEE



BOARD  
INTERVIEWS



**SELECT NEW  
DIRECTOR**

- Board should reach consensus
- Check references
- Prepare contract or agreement with salary and benefits detailed
- Press release



# Questions?

ASK ANONYMOUSLY IN THE CHAT  
TO BOB OR MICHELE.



# ONBOARDING

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Proper introduction to organization, community and stakeholders

Information Transition: Administrative, financial, technical

Strategic priorities for the next 12 months

Roles and responsibilities of the board

Process and criteria for performance evaluations, especially during the executive's first year.

# EVALUATIONS

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Evaluation of the library director is so important that it begins with the hiring process. As the position is defined and then discussed with the prospective director, evaluation checkpoints are built in.

New Jersey State Library  
New Jersey Public Libraries: A Manual for  
Trustees



# EVALUATION COMPONENTS

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Set SMART goals - guided by Strategic Priorities

Increase print circulation by 5%

Investigate feasibility of installing a generator so that the Library may serve as an emergency

heating/cooling/power-up location

Conduct data mapping to analyze and identify census tracts with low cardholder adoption

Evaluate Competencies from Job Description with set criteria

Customer Service and Community Relations, Human Resources, Financial Management

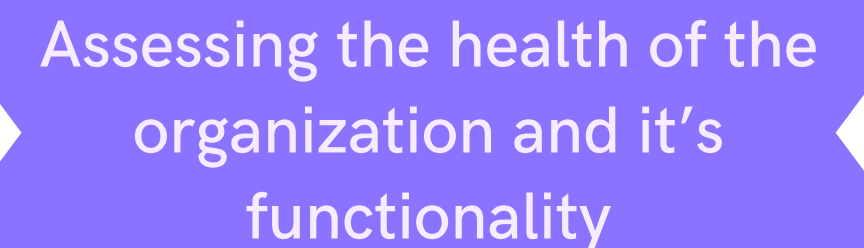
1 to 5 scale and narrative feedback

Survey to Board Members and Direct Reports (or other key staff)

Director Self-Evaluation on Goals and Competencies

Opportunity for self-reflection

Always room for improvement and reinforces of culture of learning



Assessing the health of the organization and it's functionality



# EVALUATION COMPONENTS

## ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

Collect supporting materials from the year: monthly director reports, library data, significant milestones or setbacks, performance documentation, reports or studies

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Avoid feedback that is gendered or focused on Director's personality

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Aggregate Evaluations towards Board Consensus for Final Evaluation with qualitative and quantitative feedback

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Opportunities for discussion where there are discrepancies, board agrees to a final review document

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# Conducting The Review

Either in a full board meeting or with the Chair and/or Personnel Committee

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Review Job Description and Annual Goals

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Review aggregated report that includes qualitative and quantitative feedback + Director Self evaluation

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Opportunities for discussion where there are discrepancies

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Identify items that need to be address, set expectations, offer support and motivation

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**RINSE AND REPEAT FOR NEXT YEAR.**

# Delivering a Difficult Review

Establish improvement plan and ensure there are resources available to support the library director

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Identify the issues and what is needed to improve the health of the organization

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Timeline for progress reports

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Don't make it personal, focus on actions

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Be clear and give specific examples about the issues at hand

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Listen

# Dismissing the Director

“Directors are usually dismissed only after serious infractions of Board policy, violation of the law, or very poor performance coupled with unwillingness or inability to improve.”

*Public Library Board of Trustees: Evaluating the Library Director*  
*North Dakota State Library*

New Jersey is an at-will state

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Union contracts and employee contracts can impact dismissal

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Documentation of ongoing communication, opportunities for improvement, and warnings of failure to improve

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Addressed outside of the annual evaluation process

# Thank you!

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Email us at [maura@mauradeedy.com](mailto:maura@mauradeedy.com)  
if you have more questions!

[www.mauradeedy.com](http://www.mauradeedy.com)