

Running the Facility

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Session Objectives:

- Understand who is responsible for the building according to the law
- Know what relationships are key to running a facility
- Learn about some sample forms that can be used to track facility maintenance

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“Managing the facility is perhaps one of the most challenging and unexpected responsibilities placed on the library director, in terms of [lack of] training and preparation.”

- Shannon Schultz, when preparing this presentation

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Why is it so challenging?

- Directors are not trained for it
- Every municipality/governing body has a different arrangement, including “gentlemen’s agreements”
- There is confusion as to whose responsibility it truly is

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Chapter 43.58(1):

“The library board shall also have exclusive charge, control and custody of all lands, buildings, money or other property devised, bequeathed, given or granted to, or otherwise acquired or leased by, the municipality for library purposes.”

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But...

- Despite their autonomy, public libraries are considered municipal departments
- Facilities are owned by the municipality

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Therefore...

- The library's relationship (director and board) with the municipality is extremely important to running the facility
- The same is true for personnel management (the other most challenging responsibility a director faces)

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TIPS:

- Review your relationships periodically
 - How is it budgeted?
 - Who is paying for it?
 - Are the agreements formalized?
- Review public safety issues
- Review the layout of furnishings and services with an eye for accessibility

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TIPS:

- Inventory and assess all mechanicals for preventive maintenance
 - Keep a Capital Improvement Plan with life expectancies of equipment
 - See if the library can be added to municipal service contracts under its overall facility program
 - Have conversations with municipal administrator and department heads

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TIPS:

- IF the library board chooses to contract privately with a vendor...
 - Take careful consideration to ensure that benefits outweigh any ill-will that might result from the library board exercising its authority
- Be cautious about what library staff taking on responsibilities
 - Liability, disability
 - Unrealistic expectations
 - Insurance complications

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Documents:

- [Sample Maintenance Schedule](#)
- [Annual Building Inspection Checklist](#)
- [Building & Grounds Survey](#)
- [Sample Capital Improvement Plan](#)
- [Sample Library Facility MoU](#)