



Illinois Heartland Library System

MEMO TO: IHLS Board of Directors
FROM: Leslie M. Bednar
DATE: August 21, 2024
RE: IHLS Board Member Responsibilities

At our July board meeting, a member requested information related to the board's responsibility to hire, establish the salary, and to determine the contract for the executive director. In the case of Illinois library systems, these responsibilities are well-defined in the enacting legislation and administrative rules.

The statutory guidance is enhanced by additional information developed and approved by the Board of Directors. We have included the IHLS Commitment to Serve and IHLS Board Member Expectations to give you a more thorough sense of the roles and responsibilities of members. Hopefully, this information will reinforce your work as a member of the IHLS Board of Directors.

The Illinois Library System Act ([75 ILCS 10/](#)) clearly defines the responsibilities of library system board of directors, including at 75 ILCS 10/7 6:

5. To appoint and to fix the compensation of a competent librarian, who shall have the authority to hire such other employees as may be necessary, to fix their compensation, and to remove such appointees, subject to the approval of the board. The board may also retain counsel and professional consultants, as needed.

Board of Directors requirements are further defined at [23 ILAC 3030.250](#), specifically:

g) The system board shall employ an executive director, reporting to and accountable to the system board, who shall have a master's degree from an American Library Association-accredited library education program and who has a minimum of five years postgraduate employment that includes a minimum of two years of library administrative experience. The executive director shall have the authority to hire such other employees as may be necessary, to fix their compensation, and to remove those employees, subject to the approval of the board. Salaries shall be based on a board-approved written compensation plan.

I look forward to a robust conversation at our meeting on August 27. Thank you.

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Library System Act- Boards

(75 ILCS 10/6) (from Ch. 81, par. 116)

Sec. 6. The board and officers of the public library served by the library system defined in subparagraph (2) of the definition of "library system" in Section 2 shall administer that library system. That public library system shall annually submit a plan of service to be approved by the State Librarian. The plan of service shall include the provision of specified services for all types of libraries operating within the municipal territory of the system subject to approval or revision by the State Librarian. The multitype services shall be provided in consultation with the multitype library system defined in subparagraph (3) of the definition of "library system" in Section 2 serving the same municipal territory.

(Source: P.A. 93-527, eff. 8-14-03.)

(75 ILCS 10/7) (from Ch. 81, par. 117)

Sec. 7. Each board of library directors of a system shall carry out the spirit and intent of this Act and, in addition to the other powers conferred by this Act, shall have the following powers:

1. To develop and to amend the bylaws and the plan of service for the system subject to the approval of the State Librarian.

2. To have the exclusive control of the expenditure of all moneys and funds held in the name of the library system.

3. To make and adopt such policies, rules and regulations for the government and operation of the library system as necessary.

4. To purchase or lease ground and to construct, purchase or lease, and occupy an appropriate building or buildings for the use of the library system including but not limited to the power to purchase or lease either real or personal property for system purposes through contracts which provide for the consideration for such purchase or lease to be paid through installments at stated intervals during a certain period not to exceed 20 years together with interest at a rate not to exceed the interest rate specified in Section 2 of the Bond Authorization Act on the unpaid balance owing and to purchase real estate for system purposes upon a mortgage basis for up to 75% of the total consideration therefor, the remaining balance to be paid through installments at stated intervals for a period not to exceed 20 years together with interest at a rate not to exceed the interest rate specified in Section 2 of the Bond Authorization Act on the unpaid balance owing, except that in the case of a library system consisting of a single public library or multitype library system serving a city of over 500,000 population, this power shall be governed by the provisions of Division 10 of Article 8 of the Illinois Municipal Code.

5. To appoint and to fix the compensation of a competent librarian, who shall have the authority to hire such other employees as may be necessary, to fix their compensation, and to remove such appointees, subject to the approval of the board. The board may also retain counsel and professional consultants, as needed.

6. To contract with any public or private corporation or entity for the purpose of providing or receiving library service or of performing any and all other acts necessary and proper to carry out the responsibilities and the provisions of this Act. This power includes, but is not limited to participation in interstate library compacts and library systems, and the expenditure of any federal or State funds made available to any county, municipality, township or to the State of Illinois for library purposes.

7. To accrue and accumulate funds in special reserve funds pursuant to the provisions of a plan to acquire realty, improved or unimproved, for library system purposes.

8. To be a body politic and corporate, to contract and to hold title to property by the name of the "Board of Directors of the Library System,, Illinois", and in that name to sue and be sued and to take any action authorized by law.

9. To undertake programs for the purpose of encouraging the addition to the district of adjacent areas without local tax-supported library service, and to expend funds for this purpose.

10. To join the library system as a member in the Illinois Library Association and the American Library Association, non-profit, non-political, 501(c)(3) associations, as designated by the federal Internal Revenue Service, having the purpose of library development and librarianship; to provide for the payment of annual membership dues, fees and assessments and act by, through and in the name of such instrumentality by providing and disseminating information and research services, employing personnel and doing any and all other acts for the purpose of improving library development.

11. To take and to have title to any personal or real property acquired by it for library system purposes.

12. To borrow funds for the purpose of expanding or improving the system's facilities through the mortgaging of system owned property or of borrowing against other system owned assets. The mortgaging of system owned property or the borrowing against other system owned assets shall not exceed 75% of the value thereof.

(Source: P.A. 91-357, eff. 7-29-99.)



Bylaws Article VI Board of Directors

Article VI Board of Directors

Section 1. The System shall be governed by a Board of Directors of fifteen (15) members. No library shall be represented by more than one Board member. All Board members must be eligible electors in the geographical area of the System. Eligible electors are individuals who are eligible to register to vote within the territory of the System.

Section 2. Duties of Board

The Board of Directors of the System shall have the authority to make such policy to carry out the spirit and intent of The Illinois Library System Act and shall have the powers conferred by the Act. The Board of Directors as a whole has the responsibility to review and approve the overall budget as submitted by the Executive Director.

Section 3.

The Board of Directors shall be composed of elected members according to the following manner:

- a. Eight (8) members from the governing boards of public library members.
- b. Two (2) members representing public libraries
- c. Three (3) members representing school libraries
- d. One (1) member representing special libraries
- e. One (1) member representing academic libraries

Section 4. Nominating Committee for the Board of Directors.

A Nominating Committee of five (5) members, who shall be eligible electors within the geographic area of the System, shall be appointed by the President of the System Board, with Board approval, in October of each year. It is the preference of the Board that a minimum of two members from the current Nominating Committee will serve the following year in order to ensure continuity of the process. No currently sitting System Board member may serve on the Nominating Committee and no Nominating Committee Member may be slated for that election to the System Board.

- a. The Nominating Committee shall select and confirm candidates for election to the System Board representing all geographic areas. Nominees must be members of a governing board of a member library, professional staff or the administration of the type of library to be represented as set out in these Bylaws. The call for nominations will be appropriately publicized to the Members of the System and any member may propose names for the Nominating Committee's consideration. Additional nominations may be sent to the Nominating Committee upon written petitions of ten (10) member libraries represented by the type of seat on the System Board to be filled. Such petitions, accompanied by written acceptance of the nominee, must be filed with the System Executive Assistant who will forward them to the Chair of the Nominating Committee for inclusion on the list of nominees. Criteria for the inclusion or any elimination of names to appear on the ballot will be developed by the Nominating Committee, and this information will be included with the certification results presented to the Board at its May meeting. The determination of the final slate of candidates is the responsibility of the

Nominating Committee, with the goal of creating a balanced ballot representative of all System members.

b. The Nominating Committee shall prepare a ballot and certify that all candidates are eligible electors in the geographic area of the System. The ballot will include no more than six (6) eligible candidates for each open seat. Any incumbent board member running for a second term will automatically be awarded a slot on the ballot. In the event that there are no eligible candidates for an open position on the IHLS board, there will be a write-in vote. Any viable write-in candidate will be required to meet all eligibility criteria for the specific board position and must receive a minimum of five (5) affirmative votes in order to win election. The nominating committee must verify the winning candidate. If there is no clear winner from the write-in vote, the president will appoint a new board member.

c. The ballot will be distributed to each member library agency electronically by March 15. A library agency is defined as a library or libraries with a single governing body or corporate authority. For example, a public library with branches would be counted as a single agency as would a school district with libraries in several buildings. Each library will be entitled to return only one ballot for its choice of candidates for the System Board of Directors. Before the vote is cast, each library agency should determine who will be responsible for casting the vote for its agency. The Nominating Committee will accept only the first completed ballot, if multiple votes are cast by the same library agency.

d. Ballots must be completed and submitted by April 15th to be counted. In the event of a tie, a subsequent election to break the tie will be announced no later than April 25th. This ballot will be available electronically for one full week. The Nominating Committee will certify the election results to the System Board of Directors at its May meeting each year.

Section 5. Terms of Office

- a. Except for those Board members who are elected to the Initial System Board in 2011 and who draw either one- or two-year terms as provided in Section 4d above, and for those board members whose term might be limited by Section 5b below, all Board members will be elected for a term of three (3) years.
- b. No Board member shall be permitted to serve for more than a total of six (6) consecutive years unless two (2) years have elapsed since his/her sixth year of service.
- c. All terms of office shall be staggered, with one-third of the board seats ending each year.
- d. Terms of office begin on July 1 and end on June 30, the System's fiscal year.
- e. Any appointment to the System Board for a partial term is counted as a full year of service at the conclusion of the most current fiscal year.
- f. Prior service in office on the board of directors of any Illinois Library System, shall count toward the statutory maximum of serving a total of no more than six (6) years as a director, unless two years has elapsed since their sixth year of service.

Section 6. Economic Interest

- a. No member of the System Board may profit personally, either directly or indirectly, from any business connected with the System.
- b. Each member of the System Board shall file a Statement of Economic Interest pursuant to the Illinois Governmental Ethics Act.
- c. All records and accounts of the System shall be kept in the System headquarters office and in the custody of the Executive Director. All such records and accounts shall be open to the inspection and use of all members of the System Board at all reasonable times.

- d. The members of the System Board shall serve without compensation, but their actual and necessary expenses shall be paid by the System.

Section 7.

Should a board member no longer be an eligible elector within the geographic area of the System, or leave the local position by virtue of which he/she was eligible, nominated and elected, the seat shall be declared vacant. Vacancies may be filled by appointment by the remaining members of the Board. The appointee shall serve for the unexpired term of the Director replaced. Persons appointed must have the same qualifications as those elected, and represent the constituency of the vacant seat.

Section 8. Officers

- a. The Officers of the Board of Directors shall be a President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer.
- b. The Board Nominating Committee shall present a slate of candidates to the Board at the first meeting of the fiscal year. Additional nominations may be made from the floor. The Directors shall then vote on the slate of candidates.
- c. The Officers shall be elected for one year, and no Officer shall serve more than two consecutive terms. A term of six months or more shall be considered a full term.
- d. The duties of the Officers shall be:
 - i. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Board, appoint any necessary committees, be an ex officio member of all committees, and be entitled to vote on such committees.
 - ii. The Vice-President shall preside at meetings in the absence of the President and shall in case of the resignation of the President assume the President's responsibilities until the election of a new President.
 - iii. The Secretary shall have responsibility for the records of the Board of Directors.
 - iv. The Treasurer shall be chairperson of the Finance Committee. Before entering the duties, the Treasurer shall be required to give a bond in an amount equal to at least 50% of the average amount of the system's operating fund from the prior 3 fiscal years. Cost of the bond is paid by IHLS.
 - v. Should an office become vacant prior to the expiration of the term of that office, the Directors shall elect from their members an Officer to fill the unexpired term.

Section 9. Attendance of Board members

Board members are expected to fulfill the duties imposed on them by the nature of their office. It is expected that Board members attend meetings at a public location for regularly scheduled meeting of the full board. Board members must notify the System Executive Director if they are unable to attend a board meeting. When a Board member is absent from a meeting, the following actions will be taken. The President shall notify in writing any member missing his or her second meeting. Upon a member's third absence the topic will be included on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting. The System Board, by a majority vote may, with a quorum present, declare a Board position vacant if a Director fails to attend three (3) meetings during the fiscal year.



Board Member Commitment to Serve

Recognizing the important responsibility I am undertaking in serving as a member of the Board of Directors for the Illinois Heartland Library System, I hereby personally pledge to carry out in a trustworthy and diligent manner all the duties and obligations inherent in my role as a member of the board.

My Role:

I acknowledge that my role as a board member is to (1) contribute by defining the Library System's mission and governing the fulfillment of that mission, and (2) carry out the functions of the office of board member as specified in the Library System's bylaws and policies.

My role as a board member will focus on the development of board policies that govern implementation of the institutional plans and purposes. This role is separate and distinct from the role of executive director, to whom is delegated the responsibility of determining the means of implementation of board policies.

My Commitment:

I will exercise the duties and responsibilities of this office with integrity, fairness, and due care.

My Pledge:

- 1) To establish as a high priority my attendance at all meetings of the board, committees and task forces on which I serve
- 2) To come prepared to contribute to the discussion of issues and business to be addressed at scheduled meetings, having read the agenda, and all background material.
- 3) To represent the Library System in a positive and supportive manner at all times and in all places.
- 4) To support in a positive manner all actions taken by the board of directors even when I am in the minority position on such actions.
- 5) To refrain from intruding in administrative issues that are the responsibility of the management, except to monitor the results and prohibit methods not in agreement with board policy.
- 6) To recognize conflicts of interest between my position as a board member and my personal and professional life. If such a conflict does arise, I will declare that conflict before the board, and refrain from voting on matters in which I have a conflict.

- 7) To observe the parliamentary procedures outlined in Roberts Rules of Order and display courteous conduct in all board, committee, and task force meetings.
- 8) To make every effort to learn the job of being a board member and seek methods to help me function better as a part of the board team.
- 9) To participate in (a) the annual strategic planning (b) board self-evaluation programs and (c) board development workshops, seminars, and other educational events that enhance my skills as a board member.
- 10) If, for any reason, I find myself unable to carry out the above duties and responsibilities, I agree to resign my position on the Board of Directors.

Signed

Date



Illinois Heartland Library System

MEMO TO: Board of Directors
FROM: Sandy West
DATE: September 20, 2017
RE: IHLS Board Member Expectations

As elected library system board members, we have statutory and peer responsibilities. We also serve as volunteers who have obligations elsewhere.

The attached document was developed for two primary purposes:

- To provide current members an easy reference guide and be included in new board member binders
- To be shared with potential board members as we begin the board member nominations process and to be shared on the IHLS website

I hope you will find this a helpful guide. It is intended to serve us now and into the future.

Thank you.

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Board Member Expectations

Orientation & Training

Board members, both newly seated and veteran, are required to attend orientation and training. This is an all-day event that usually takes place in July.

Illinois State Library Requirements

Board members are expected to attend board meetings in person at one of the designated in person locations. Board members are required to complete the Open Meetings Act training and provide a copy of earned certificate to the executive assistant. Completion of training must be done within 90 days of being seated or reelected. Members are also required to complete and submit a Statement of Economic Interest. Illinois Heartland Library System (IHLS) is required to provide this information to the Illinois State Library and auditors annually.

Attendance

Board members must notify the System Executive Director if they are unable to attend a board meeting. When a Board member is absent from a meeting, the following actions will be taken. The President shall notify in writing any member missing his or her second meeting. Upon a member's third absence the topic will be included on the agenda for discussion at the next meeting. The System Board, by a majority vote may, with a quorum present, declare a Board position vacant if a Director fails to attend three (3) meetings during the fiscal year.

Email

Board members are assigned an IHLS email address to be used for all board- related business. This includes communication with IHLS staff regarding board and committee schedules as well as correspondence from member library staff. We highly recommend you check your IHLS email frequently to avoid missing important announcements, information or meeting cancellations and time changes. Instructions will be provided for the option of forwarding IHLS emails to your phone or other devices if you choose. IT staff is available for technical questions or issues regarding IHLS email.

Staff Communication

Board members are kindly requested to reply to communications from IHLS staff as soon as they are able. IHLS staff communicate with board members primarily via email. Timely communication allows IHLS staff to best support the goals and work of the board. Our staff goal is to provide board and committee meeting materials as far in advance as possible, beginning with various committee meetings held early each month. Completion of many board support responsibilities is contingent upon communication with board members.

You may be contacted by different staff members for various reasons. Each board committee is assigned an IHLS Department Director, and they will send meeting documents and attend the meeting to serve in an advisory role and to take minutes. The executive assistant supports both the executive director and board members by scheduling meetings and events, creating calendars and documents, polling members and ensuring legal compliance for the Open Meetings Act certification and Statement of Economic Interest filing, among other responsibilities.

A complete overview on the board of directors can be found on the IHLS website
<http://illinoisheartland.org/sites/default/files/about/policies/Bylaws-Amended-April-2016.pdf>