

KDLA May 2011 Trustee Tip of the Month What Paperwork Do Trustees Need to Keep?

Quick Tips

- ◆ Public Libraries are the official depository of all records received or produced by the library that are public records and subject to the Open Records Act.
- ◆ Trustees on the Library Board are **not** required to keep any paperwork. There are some documents that are recommended to be kept during your term on the Board.
- ◆ If discarding Board Packet documents, shred them or allow the Library Director to dispose of them.
- ◆ Always refer requests for documents to the Library Director to handle according to legal requirements and library policy.

As a new Library Board Trustee, you will begin accumulating library- and board-related paperwork. As you continue serving your term(s), you may begin to wonder how much of this paperwork you need to keep. You may even be unsure if there is a mandate on what you need to keep. The quick answer is that Trustees are NOT required by law or any other order to keep any paperwork.

The Library, as a local governmental unit, is the repository for all official documents received by or created for the Library or Library Board of Trustees. Government agencies ARE required by law to establish and maintain a records management program for public records. Some records need only be retained for a defined period of time while others may need to be kept permanently. There are two documents which help libraries to determine how long to keep the various records created in the course of doing business, *Local Governments General Records Retention Schedule* and *Public Library & Library Board Records Retention Schedule*. Both of these are available on the KDLA Web site at:

<http://kdl.ky.gov/records/retentionschedules/Pages/LocalRecordsSchedules.aspx>.

Now that you know that you are not required to keep any of the documents distributed to you, the question becomes, “What should I keep to help me in carrying out my duties as a Library Board Trustee?” There are many documents that you will find helpful and want to keep during your term(s) on the Board.

Soon after you are appointed to serve on the Library Board you will take the Oath of Office, administered by the County Judge/Executive, a judicial officer, or a Notary Public. You will receive two very important documents, *Your Duty Under the Law* and *Managing Government Records*. These two documents are very important and you will want to keep these as they cover your duties and requirements relating to the Open Meetings Act [KRS 61.800 to 61.850] and Open Records Act [KRS 61.879-61.884].



Serving Kentucky's Need to Know

Next, to help acquaint you with the critical information you will need when beginning your first term as a Public Library Board Trustee, the Library Director will provide a binder containing foundational documents that you will want at your disposal and will help you quickly get up-to-speed on Library and Board issues and business activity.

The binder's key documents that you will want to keep may include:

- ◆ Trustees' names & contact information
- ◆ Meeting location, day and time
- ◆ Board bylaws and policies
- ◆ Library policies
- ◆ The Library's strategic or long-range plan
- ◆ The current Annual Report and Standards Report
- ◆ Previous and current years' budgets
- ◆ *The Kentucky Public Library Trustee Manual*
- ◆ Minutes from the previous year's meetings
- ◆ A variety of other informational materials that will provide the background and overview of Library information that you will need in carrying out your duties as a Trustee

Prior to each monthly Board Meeting, the Director will send you a board packet either by mail or e-mail. The packet will include an agenda, minutes from the previous month's meeting and financial statements for approval, statistical and narrative reports, and other paperwork to provide information on issues and business that will be discussed at the monthly meeting. These packet documents are important and should be reviewed before the Board meeting so business can be handled efficiently.

For the first year you may want to keep everything in these Board packets until you are acclimated and can decide what you might want to refer back to for additional information or to jog your memory. Once oriented, the materials you decide to keep on hand will be a personal choice. If you discard the materials included in previous Board packets, they will still be on file and available at the Library should you want to refer back to it.

While not a requirement, it is wise to shred or allow the Library Director to dispose of any documents that you decide to discard. This will ensure that no unofficial copies will inadvertently be released to anyone.

It is important to refer all inquiries for Board records to the Library Director to be handled as an Open Records request. The Library is the repository of the official Board documents and by referring all requests to the Director will ensure that the official copies are released and handled according to legal requirements and Library policy.

All *Trustee Tips of the Month* are available at: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/trustees/Pages/TrusteeTips.aspx>.

This is not legal advice and I am not an attorney. If you feel you need legal advice you should consult an attorney.

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What Paperwork Do Trustees Need to Keep? Addendum:

*This list of documents you may want to keep on hand are *recommendations for Trustees ONLY*.

Keep these documents for your entire Board term(s):

- ◆ Current list of Trustees' and Library Director's contact information
- ◆ Library Mission Statement and Vision
- ◆ Library Organizational Chart
- ◆ *Kentucky Public Library Trustee Manual*
- ◆ Board bylaws
- ◆ Board Policy Manual
- ◆ Library Policy Manual
- ◆ Audits
- ◆ *Your Duty Under the Law* [Open Meetings/Open Records brochure]
- ◆ *Managing Government Records* [Public Records Management Law]
- ◆ *Directions for Going into Executive Session*
- ◆ *KDLA Welcomes You as a New Library Trustee!*: Orientation Document

Keep these documents for the fiscal year; discard previous year's documents in July:

- ◆ Meeting minutes
- ◆ Monthly financial reports
- ◆ Monthly statistics (circulation, library usage, etc.)
- ◆ Board annual calendar
- ◆ Annual Action Plan (part of the Strategic/Long-range Plan)

Keep these documents while current until; discard when superseded:

- ◆ Strategic/Long-Range Plan
- ◆ Annual Report
- ◆ Standards Manual

Keep these documents for the current and previous year:

- ◆ Approved annual operating budget

Keep these miscellaneous documents while useful:

- ◆ Director's Reports
- ◆ Proposed changes until made official
- ◆ Construction/Renovation plans and documents

Documents always available online:

- ◆ KDLA's monthly *Trustee Tip of the Month* and other documents of interest to Trustees at the KDLA Web site: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/trustees/Pages/default.aspx>.
- ◆ Information regarding the Kentucky Library Trustee Roundtable at: <http://kdla.ky.gov/librarians/trustees/Pages/default.aspx>.

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