

Reed discussed this topic in the August 2005 issue of FOLUSA Newsupdate.

“The most highly functional organizations have a very clear sense of the different roles of the key players - Trustees, librarian, Friends’ board members – and will ensure that they do not overlap in terms of decision making and authority”.

Resources:

Macnaughton, D. & van Haften, J. (2007). *How to form your friends of the library group*. Sault Ste. Marie, ON: Friends of Canadian Libraries.

Friends of Libraries U.S.A. *Fact sheet #10 the role of the friends board*.
(www.folusa.org/resources/pdf-versions/fact-sheet-10.pdf)

Friends of Libraries U.S.A. *Fact sheet #11 Role of trustees*.
(www.folusa.org/resources/pdf-versions/fact-sheet-11.pdf)

Southern Ontario Library Service. (1999). *Trustee tips #16: cultivating your friends*. Toronto: SOLS.
(<http://www.sols.org/publications/trustee/tips/Tip16.pdf>)

Service des bibliothèques de l’Ontario-Sud. (1999). *Tuyaux pour administrateurs No. 16 embarquez vos amis dans les amis*. Toronto: SOLS.
(www.sols.org/publications/trustee/tips/french/Tuyaux16.pdf)

Southern Ontario Library Service. *Small library kits #10 initiating a friends of the library group* (1999). Toronto: SOLS.
(www.sols.org/publications/kits/smalllibrary/index.htm (links to document and appendices))



Roles and Relationships

Roles and Relationships

Many Friends groups form because of initiative taken by a Library Board Trustee, manager or staff member. However, there is an important distinction between the role of the Library Board, Friends, and library management and staff.

Open communication on a regular basis by all parties is critical. Representation at Friends meetings by the Library Director/CEO or a liaison person and a Library Board Trustee demonstrates to the Friends group that they are important and worth the time and support of the library.

Should a Library Board Trustee also serve as the Friend’s President? This question was posed recently on the Friends of Libraries U.S.A. (FOLUSA) listserv.

FOLUSA’s Fact Sheet #10 The Role of the Friends Board notes “Friends may be future Trustees, and Trustees future Friends; however, there should be no overlapping boards.”

The role of the Friends of the Library is not to set library policy. A member should not have more power and authority than his or her peers on either board. A conflict of interest could arise if a member of the Library Board setting policy is also a member of the Friend’s Board, in a position to influence decisions about funding. In addition, according to the FOLUSA fact sheet, the Library Board may implement a policy that may not be in the best interest of the Friends.

Sally Reed, FOLUSA’s Executive Director, describes the risk of micromanagement, where an individual may cross the line between governance and not management of the library. “Both boards are (and should be) evolving with new members coming on and others leaving,” says Reed.



	BOARD	CEO	STAFF	FRIENDS
Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To govern 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To administer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To implement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To support
Mandate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Libraries Act Municipal By-law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job description Mission statement, goals and objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Job description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Constitution
Role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Policy & planning Accountability Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administration Planning and procedures Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implementation Administration as delegated Advocacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraising Volunteer support Advocacy
Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fiscal health of the library Represent the community Services that meet the needs of the community Liaison with Council Securing support for the library from Council and from the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delivery of services Staffing Budget monitoring Representing the library in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of services Advising CEO on services Representing the library in the community 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fundraising campaigns Volunteer hours or scheduling Speaking out for library services in the community
Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly meetings Budget presentation to Council Development and review of policies and plans CEO performance appraisal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Implement Board directives Monitor service delivery through output measures Supervise staff Report to Board 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executive procedures Report to CEO or delegate 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plan and execute fundraising activities Work as volunteers on specific services Report to Board Maintain membership

This table originated from the Southern Ontario Library Service. It presents the essence of the necessary separation of roles and responsibilities.