

KANSAS Trustee Education Program  
Trustee Handout

**Topic: EFFECTIVE BOARD MEETINGS**

**Definitions:**

Agenda

- provides the framework for the meeting with a list of items requiring consideration and/or action.
- requires consultation between Board Chair and Library Director

Consent Agenda

- bundles business items that require formal board approval, but due to routine, non-controversial nature, do not require board discussion before approval. Enactment is by one motion, with no separate discussion.
- typically includes such items as bills to be paid, monthly financial reports, and minutes
- typically appears at the beginning of a regular meeting agenda
- items can be removed from consent agenda and placed on the regular agenda for board discussion
  - example – minutes if there is an error that needs discussion and correction
  - only requires a request from one member or the public, no second or vote required

Quorum

- State law defines this as one more than half the membership of the board.
- A quorum is required to conduct a meeting requiring any official motions

**Discussion: Effective board meetings** require three things:

- **Commitment**
  - Trustees must commit to attend regularly.
  - Trustees must come prepared.
  - Trustees must work productively as a team. Once a decision is made in the Board meeting, all members must support the action taken.
- **Organization**
  - Using an agenda provides a consistent framework for each meeting.

Sample Agenda

- I. Call to order
- II. Public comments
- III. Call for addition to agenda
- IV. Introductions
- V. Approval of consent agenda
  - a. Prior meeting minutes
  - b. Prior month financial reports
  - c. Current month bills to be paid
- VI. Director's Report
- VII. Business Items
- VIII. Announcements
- IX. Adjournment

- **Organization (continued)**
  - Keeping accurate minutes of the meeting provides the permanent record of the Library Board's actions. Common items to include are the purpose (regular or special meeting), time (started and finished), place, list of members attending (quorum), and motions (name of individual making motion, name of second, and count of vote.). Minutes should not be transcripts of the meeting.
  - Establishing and following a consistent schedule of meeting dates and times allows Board members to reserve time for the meetings. This Board calendar of regular meetings needs displayed in the library.
  - Updating Board bylaws provides consistency and rules for participation.
  - Establishing a policy on Board absentees makes sure all Board members are participating in the process.
  - Mailing a packet to Trustees prior to the meeting. Packets should include the agenda, prior month minutes, and prior month financial reports.
  
- **Understand the responsibilities of the Library Board officers and members**
  - The Board Chair is responsible for developing the agenda with the Library Director, moving the discussion, and keeping members on track.
  - The Board Treasurer is responsible for reviewing the bills to be paid, and assisting the Director in creating the financial documents for the Board.
  - The Board Secretary prepares the minutes of the prior meeting.
  - Trustees are responsible for setting library policy and direction, not day-to-day management.
  - Library Board documents are items of public record, and all handouts should be available to be public at all regular meetings.

#### **Additional Resources:**

##### √Relevant Statutes:

- K.S.A. 12-1224 and 12-1243 [Election of officers, meeting dates and places for regular and special meetings]
- K.S.A. 75-4317 and 75-4318 [All public library board meetings are open to the public, and no actions can be taken by secret ballot]

##### √Kansas Sources:

- “Effective board meetings” in Trustee Topics: Caring for the Library Director’s Position, at <http://skyways.lib.ks.us/KLS/development/trusteetopics.html>.
- “Board members have the responsibility to be thoroughly familiar ... Open Meetings Act, Open Records Act, etc.” -- *Standards for Kansas Public Libraries, 2006 Revision*, Chapter 1, Item 1.8. Also 21, “barrier free location” in its Structure and Governance Checklist”
- “ Board Talk: Consent Agendas Help Board Meetings,” *TrusteeTalk*, November 2006, p.2. Go to [www.kslibtrustees.org](http://www.kslibtrustees.org); click TrusteeTalk Archive for a pdf.

##### √Other Online Sources:

- For an in-depth explanation of the consent agenda, its uses and procedures: Consent Agenda: A Board Resource Tool from the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership, University of Missouri – Kansas City, author: David O. Renz, Ph.D. at <http://www.bloch.umkc.edu/mwcnl/board%20resources/Consent%20Agendas.pdf>