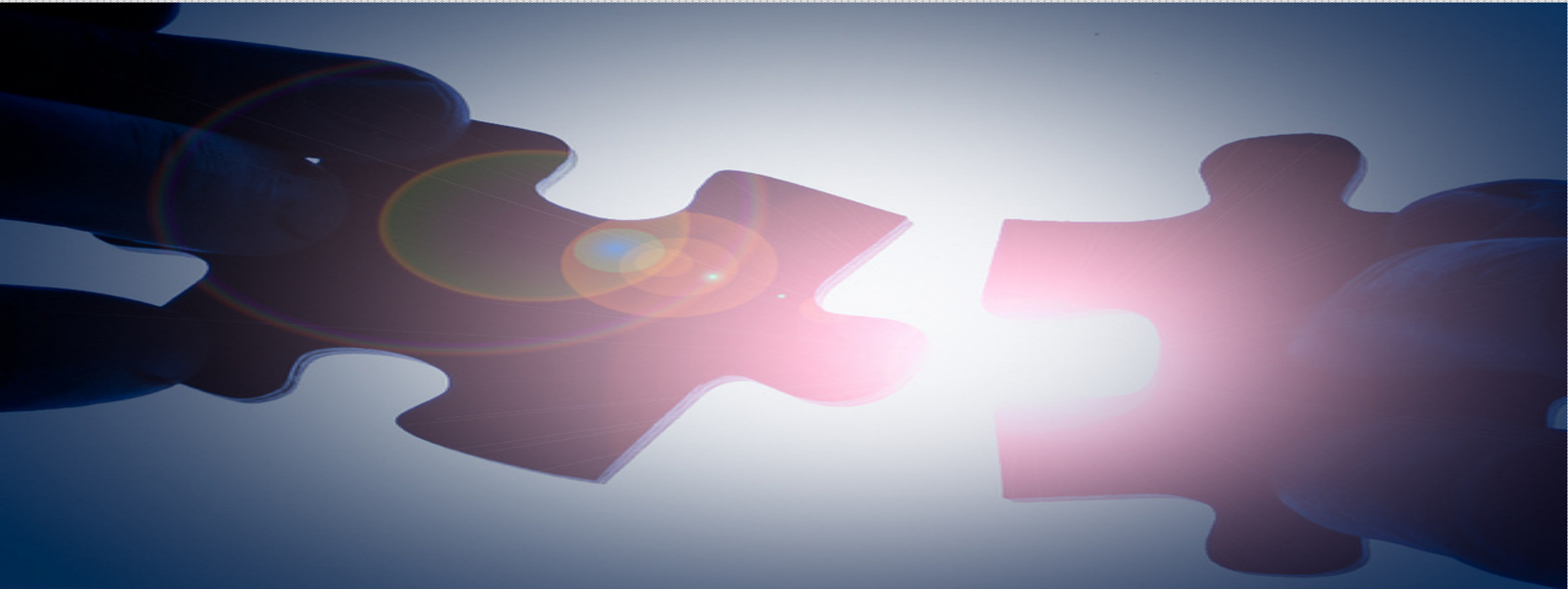


*What Every Trustee Should Know*  
Westchester Library System Trustee Workshop

March 3, 2021



# Today's Topics

- Your Job as a Trustee;
- The Critical Partnership- Trustees and Directors;
- Legal Basics
- Effective Meetings- Best Practices;
- Policies and Planning
- Q & A



# *Primary Resources*

## *Statement on the Governance Role of a Trustee or Board Member*

[www.regents.nysed.gov/about/statement\\_governance.html](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/about/statement_governance.html)

## *Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State*

[www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/handbook/index.html](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/handbook/index.html)

# Your Job as a Trustee

- Fulfill the mission;
- Act in good faith;
- Be loyal to the institution;
- Comply with the law;
- Provide Fiscal Oversight;
- Hire and work with the CEO;
- Advocate for the Library;
- Plan for the Future.

NYS Board of Regents, *Statement on the Governance Role of a Trustee or Board Member*

[www.regents.nysed.gov/about/statement\\_governance.html](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/about/statement_governance.html)



# *What is your Purpose?*

**"Making the simple complicated is commonplace; making the complicated simple, awesomely simple, that's creativity."**

Charles Mingus





[https://www.ted.com/talks/simon\\_sinek\\_how\\_great\\_leaders\\_inspire\\_action](https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action)

# Core Values

## Basic Values-

- **Intellectual Freedom**

- *“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances”*

*1<sup>st</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of the United States of America*

- **Barrier free Access to information for everyone**

- [www.ada.gov](http://www.ada.gov)
- [www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/access](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/access)

- **Privacy/Confidentiality of Library Records**

- *N.Y. Civil Practice Laws and Rules Sec.4509; 2307*
- [www.ala.org/advocacy/privacy/toolkit](http://www.ala.org/advocacy/privacy/toolkit)

*What are your community library values?*

# *Duties and Responsibilities of Public Library Trustees*

*The New York State Board of Regents defines your responsibilities as:*

- The Duty of Care
- The Duty of Loyalty/ Conflicts of Interest
- The Duty of Obedience

*In addition you are expected to:*

- Hire a CEO to manage the operation of the institution and evaluate their performance in providing services to the public;
- Ensure that financial resources are being used efficiently and effectively toward meeting the institution's goals.

[http://www.regents.nysed.gov/about/statement\\_governance.html](http://www.regents.nysed.gov/about/statement_governance.html)



## To “Act in good faith”

### The Duty of Care:

*“A trustee or board member must **act in good faith** and exercise the degree of **diligence, care and skill** that an ordinary prudent individual would use under similar circumstances in a like position.”*

- Learn about your Library and the library world;
- Attend all Board meetings and be prepared;
- Exercise fiduciary responsibility;
- Hire a qualified director and evaluate professionally;
- Ask questions!

# *The Duty of Loyalty/Conflicts of Interest*

*“Trustees owe allegiance to the institution and must act in good faith with the best interest of the organization in mind. The conduct of a trustee must further the institution’s goals and not the member’s personal or business interests...A trustee should avoid even the appearance of impropriety...”*

- Make sure the Library Board has an up to date Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Avoid even the appearance of a conflict of interest.
- **Beware of Nepotism.**
- Put the Library first!

## The Duty of Obedience

*“A trustee has a responsibility to insure that the institution’s resources are dedicated to the fulfillment of its mission. The member also has a duty to ensure that the institution complies with all applicable laws and does not engage in any unauthorized activities.”*

- Know and understand the Library’s mission.
- Be aware of important law and regulations.
- Be certain that your Library’s resources are solely dedicated to Library purposes.

# Fiduciary Accountability

*“ensure that your financial resources are being used efficiently and effectively toward meeting the institution’s goals”; and “hire a CEO to manage the operation of the institution and evaluate his/her overall performance”.*

- Select a qualified Library Director; let them manage; evaluate professionally.
- Secure sufficient financial resources for today and tomorrow.
- Monitor expenditures and get an annual independent audit.



# Trustee Best Practices

- Be Engaged: “Due Diligence”
- Respect the institution, the staff and each other;
- Work as a Collective Authority;
- Understand Responsibility vs. Delegation;
  - Don't micromanage!
- Promote Positive Corporate Culture;
- Deal with Board misbehavior;



# *The Role of the Library Director*

- **Be the CEO.**
- Implement Board policies;
- Communicate/educate/inform the Board;
- Manage Library Operations;
- Select/supervise/train Staff;
- Be informed and advise the Board on best professional practices;
- Prepare budget, recommend services, policies, etc.;
- Represent Library in the community (in cooperation with the Board).



# Making it work

*Common goals; clear roles; open communication*

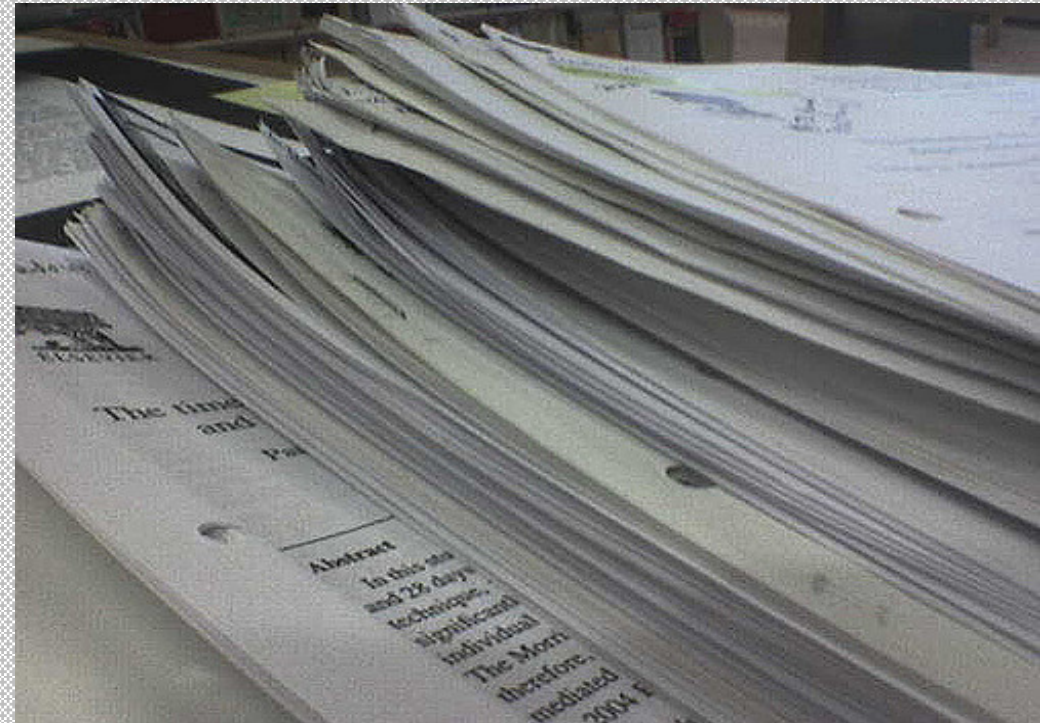
- Mission/Vision/Values;
- Communication!!!!
- What do you expect of each other?
- Delegate Responsibility for Today;  
*Assume Responsibility for Tomorrow.*
- The Strategic Planning Process;  
*It's a process; not a plan....*
- Honesty is the best Policy.





# Legal Basics for Library Trustees

- Lack of State Constitutional Provisions
- Who establishes public libraries?
- Education Corporations
- Public vs. Private
- The Four Types of Public Libraries:
  - Association
  - Municipal
  - School District
  - Special District



# *The Public Library Network in New York State*

- The Board of Regents
- Commissioner of Education
- State Education Department
- State Library; Division of Library Development
- Public Library Systems

*All support the 756 public libraries in New York State*

# *Effective Board Meetings*

*Respect the Institution; the Public and your **Time!***



# Effective Board Meetings Preparation and Conduct

- The Board Packet
- Agenda - Essential Components
- The Board President's Role
- The Director's Role
- The Secretary/Minutes
- Parliamentary Procedures
- Dealing with the Public



# Effective Board Meetings Legal Aspects

- Meeting Notices
- Content of Minutes
- Executive Sessions
- Rights of the Public
- Quorum/Voting
- **Post your Minutes!**

<https://www.dos.ny.gov/coog>



# Effective Board Meetings Financial Review

- Evaluate Financial Reports
- Approve all Expenditures
- Maintain Reserve Funds
- Have Investment Policies



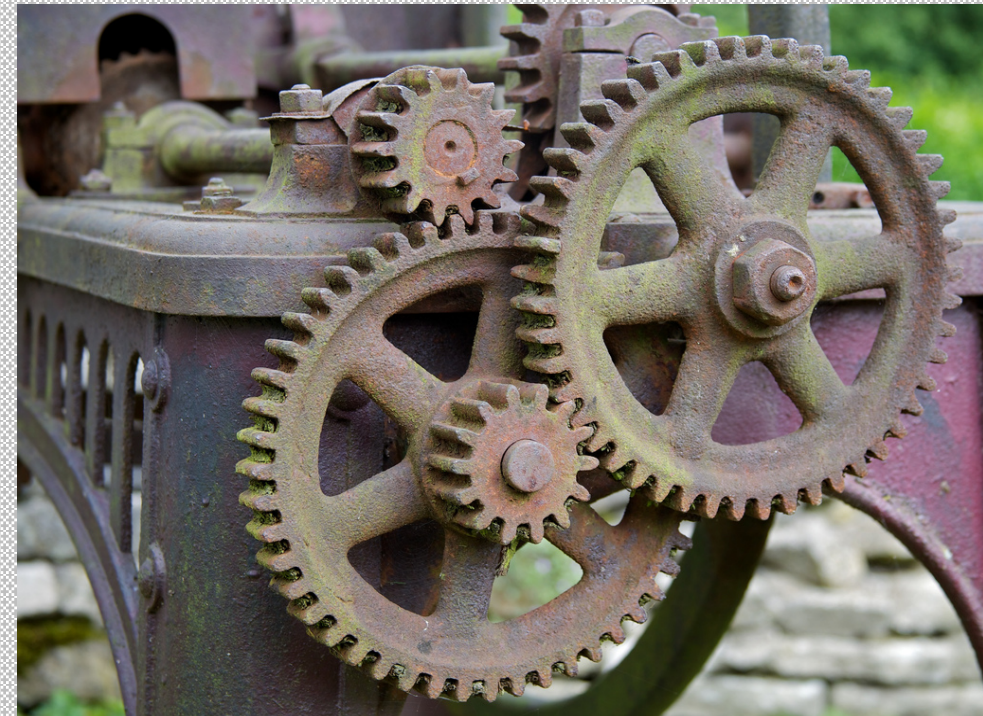
# Effective Board Meetings Personnel Actions

- Director Selects; Board Appoints
- Seek Diversity in your Community
- Avoid the Appearance of Nepotism
- Civil Service



# Public Library Policies

- Policies are the rules of the Library;
- Policies should be developed thoughtfully and revised regularly;
- Policies provide legal protection;
- Policies are useless unless.....  
you and your patrons know them.





# *The Planning Process*

- Develop a Board Vision
- Assess the State of the Library
- Get Input from your Community
- Analyze what you've Learned
- Prioritize and make a Plan
- Evaluate Regularly



- New York State Library. Helpful Information for Meeting Standard #2: Long Range Plan <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/helpful.htm#LRP>
- Strategic Planning: Creating a Path for the Future, NYS Library mini-webinars: <https://vimeo.com/236954184>; <https://vimeo.com/236956936>
- Planning and Evaluation [Mid-Hudson Library System] <http://midhudson.org/topics/trustees/#Planning>
- Simply Strategic [Pioneer Library System] <http://pls-net.org/plan>



Lastly, please remember...it's about the Library, not about you.

Always keep in mind that your primary job is to provide the highest quality library service possible for your community.

Not the cheapest.

# If you want to learn more...

[http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/webinars/index.html:](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/webinars/index.html)

[\*What Every Trustee Should Know\*](#)

[\*The Critical Partnership: Public Library Trustees and Directors\*](#)

[\*Basic Library Law for Trustees\*](#)

[\*Public Library Finance and the Trustee's Fiduciary Responsibilities\*](#)

[\*Freedom of Information and Open Meetings Laws for Libraries\*](#)

[\*The Role of Trustees in Planning and Evaluation: Effective Strategies to Utilize All Your Resources for Success\*](#)

[\*Building for Your Future: Public Library Renovation and Construction from Dream to Dedication; an Overview\*](#)

[\*What's New in the Trustee Handbook?\*](#)

[\*Sustainable Thinking for the Future of Libraries\*](#)

[www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/handbook/index.html](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/handbook/index.html)

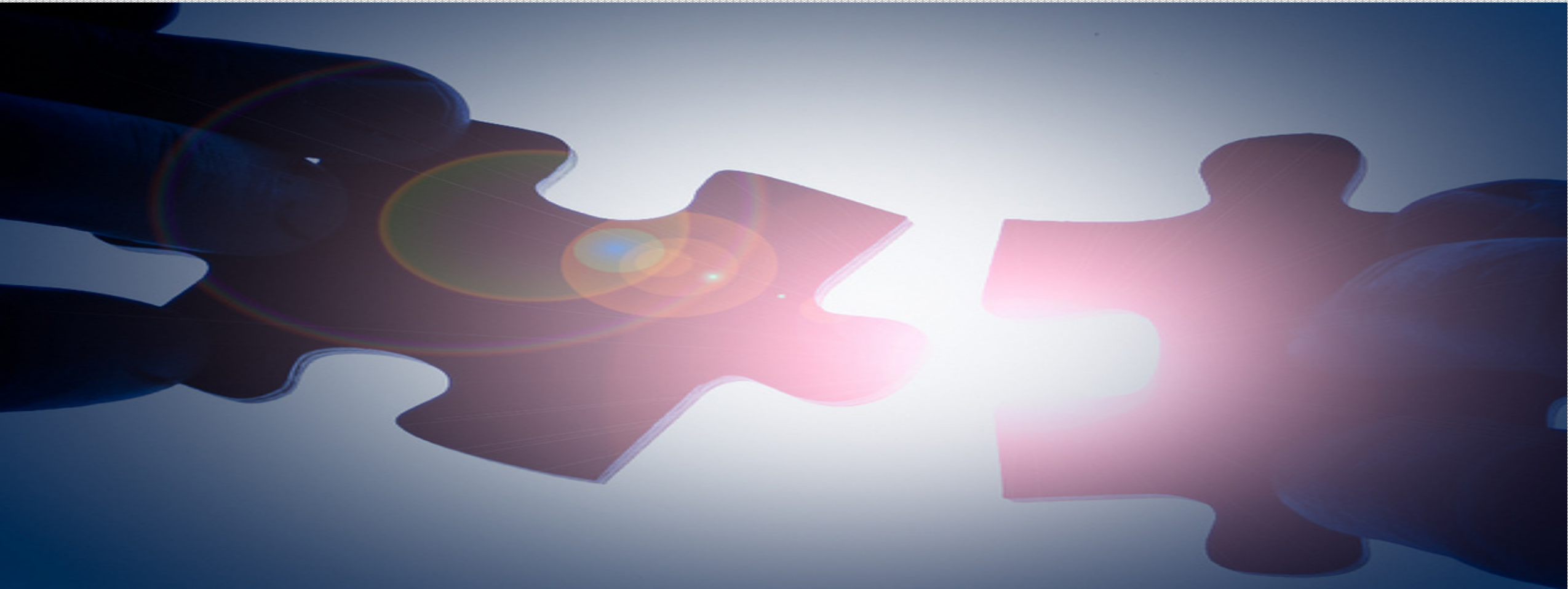
[https://www.ted.com/talks/simon\\_sinek\\_how\\_great\\_leaders\\_inspire\\_action](https://www.ted.com/talks/simon_sinek_how_great_leaders_inspire_action)

# Trustee Resources

- New York State Division of Library Development: [www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev)
- New York Library Association: [www.nyla.org](http://www.nyla.org)
- Library Trustees Association of New York: <https://www.nyla.org/lta/?menukey=lta>
- Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations: [www.ala.org/united](http://www.ala.org/united)

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- “Puzzle” slide 1 & 29: [www.SeniorLiving.Org](http://www.SeniorLiving.Org)
- “Taking notes” slide 2: <http://www.freeimages.com/photo/taking-notes-1238123>
- “Trust” slide 4: Weinstock; Symphony of Love
- “Why” slide 5: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/ksayer/5614813544/sizes/l>
- “Knowledge” slide 12: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/mrshoes/5489407022>
- “Simple is Hard” slide 13: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/will-lion/>
- “Teamwork” slide 14: [www.thegoldguys.blogspot.com](http://www.thegoldguys.blogspot.com)
- “Balanced rocks” slide 15: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/wwworks/>
- “Vision” slide 16: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/rachaelvoorhees/>
- “Pile of Paper” slide 17: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/jepoirrier/>
- “Board Room” : slide 18: St. Thomas Public Library
- “Balloon”: slide 19: [www.flickr.com/photos/librariesrock](http://www.flickr.com/photos/librariesrock)
- “Scale” slide 20: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brazilian\\_balance\\_scales.JPG](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Brazilian_balance_scales.JPG)
- “Money Scrabble”: slide 21: “PT Money” [ptmoney.com](http://ptmoney.com)
- “Jellybeans’ slide 22: [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Color\\_Overload\\_\(4911180896\).jpg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Color_Overload_(4911180896).jpg)
- “Gears” slide 23: [flickr.com](http://flickr.com)
- “Cards” slide 24: [flickr.com/photos/fsse-info/](http://flickr.com/photos/fsse-info/)
- “First Library card” slide 25: [www.flickr.com/photos/newtonfreelibrary](http://www.flickr.com/photos/newtonfreelibrary)