

## Sustainable Funding

A new year means resolutions...and referendums! Trustee responsibilities are small in number but broad in scope. A key responsibility of your board is to secure adequate and sustainable funding so the library can fulfill its mission. One way many of our member libraries achieve this is through a referendum. January is the time to begin the process if you're starting fresh or asking for an increase

NYS allows libraries to request funds directly from school district taxpayers by asking them to vote on a resolution placed on the annual school budget vote. This is the definition of a "school ballot referendum". School district taxpayers pay an amount based on their assessed property value. Referendums are a form of sustainable funding for libraries because once your community votes "yes", your library receives those funds every year. Your library can decide to ask for more funding as needs develop.

To be clear, library referendums do not affect the school budget and are not part of the school budget. Rather, the existing school budget vote is a tax collecting mechanism already in place that makes it easy to ask taxpayers to support the library.

When one library within a school district decides to go for a referendum, we recommend that other libraries in the same district do so as well since all school district taxpayers will be responsible for paying the library tax even if the library in their community does not participate. The more libraries that participate within a school district the more likely the referendum is to pass.

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## Upcoming Workshops and Recordings

**Trustee Handbook Book Club: Advocacy | January 22 | 5 – 6 PM | Online | [REGISTER](#)**

Join co-author of the Handbook For Library Trustees of New York State Rebekkah Smith Aldrich and friends for this fun and informative series!

Stephanie "Cole" Adams will be hosting five additional webinars for ESLN as well as for [the Ask an HR Expert series](#) in 2025.

### Recordings

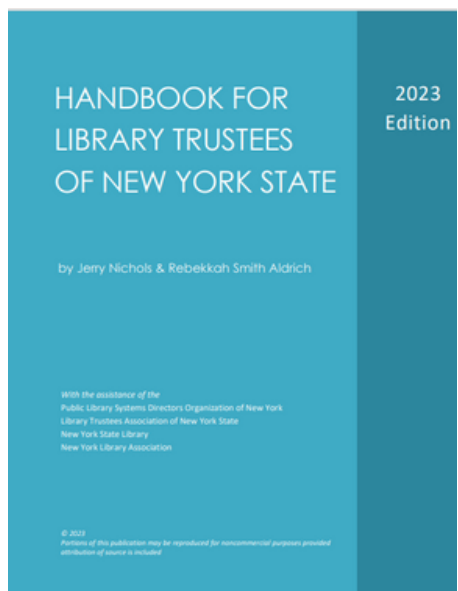
[Unlocking the Mysteries of Directors & Officers Insurance \(11/22/2024\)](#)

[Ask the Lawyer recordings here](#) and [Recently Asked Questions here](#)

Lawyer Stephanie "Cole" Adams answers questions from libraries around NYS

### [Trustee Handbook Book Club Archive](#)

The Mid-Hudson Library System archives sessions of this popular and informative program.



## What's New in the Trustee Handbook: Public Relations and Advocacy

People receive their information from many sources-- some more credible than others. Because of this changing information landscape, boards must be thoughtful and proactive as they develop the library's messaging. You have the responsibility of reaching all members of your library's community: patrons, taxpayers, and other partners.

The 2023 edition of the Trustee Handbook has some tips on how to best accomplish this.

<https://nyslibrary.libguides.com/Handbook-Library-Trustees/public-relations>

*Need a copy?  
Reach out to Sarah or Heidi*

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### Annual Reports and Meetings

Your library's Annual Report to the Community and your Annual Meeting summaries are perfect ways to share your library's story with the community.

The Annual Report to the Community is also a Minimum Standard. Learn more here:

<https://nyslibrary.libguides.com/publiclibrarystandards/report>

You can find FLLS' *Annual Report to the Community for 2023* and our *2024 Annual Meeting Summary* here:

<https://www.flls.org/about-us/>

They contain your library stats and other important FLLS info in them.

**Note:** *The Annual Report to the Community is different from the NYS Annual Report. Libraries will be receiving info about that as it becomes available in January.*

### Oath of Office

It's a new year so that means Municipal, School District, and Special Legislative Library trustees need to file an oath of office with their village, town, or county clerks. You can learn more at

<https://www.nysl.nysed.gov/libdev/trustees/oath.htm>

### Library Advocacy Day 2025

Advocacy Day is **Tuesday, February 5th**. Watch for more info from FLLS coming soon.

Meanwhile, If you haven't already, please use [this call to action](#) from the NYLA to encourage the Governor to increase funding for libraries and library systems in the executive budget.

