



Advocacy: a supplement to the June 5, 2020 LD&L webinar “Positioning the Library for a Post-pandemic Sustainable Future”

Advocacy is the long term process of creating & banking goodwill for your library among stakeholders

- **Add real value:** the library must listen and respond to community needs instead of just informing residents what it has to offer
- **Every encounter is an opportunity**
 - Keep a list of potential resident advocates
 - Collect stories of the impact of the library on their lives
- **Develop partnerships and networks**
 - Library staff members each have a network of family, friends and circles of civic engagement
 - Library friends and foundation groups reach back into the community
 - Well supported libraries are a community selling point for business growth and recruitment
- **Integrate the library into the business community**
 - Inventory the ways in which library services are of value to small businesses and community employers
 - Look for partnerships and networks of mutual advantage
 - If a full Chamber of Commerce membership is beyond your budget, ask to be added to the e-newsletter and contribute information about library programs that draw shoppers to local businesses
 - Increase Chamber of Commerce awareness that folks who come into town to use the library, often visit businesses at the same time
 - Interact with Chamber members in more ways than just asking for donations or prizes
- **Be part of the municipal team**
 - Look for ways to partner with municipal departments and develop collegial relationships with other city workers.
 - Write thank you notes to the underappreciated
- **Maintain a year-round relationship with local elected officials** (not just at budget time)
 - Pay attention to local, county elections. Send notes of congratulations to the winners and “thanks for running for office” notes to those who were unsuccessful.
 - Invite new members of your municipal board to visit the library for an orientation session as an opportunity to get acquainted. Discussion starter: Ask about their childhood memories of the library they grew up in!

How much can your county and community receive from the \$200 Million "Routes to Recovery: Local Government Aid Grants" Program?

[Announcement press release](#)

["We're All In" Grants webpage](#)

[Routes to Recovery County Allocations](#)

[Routes to Recovery Local Government Allocations](#)

Municipal Advocacy Checkup

Think of municipal decision makers as "Key Customers." Corporate librarians often maintain a list of corporate officers, department heads, and the like. They keep track of what these key customers are currently doing and try to supply them with needed information even before it is requested.

- Can you list the names of your municipal administrator and all members of your City Council, Village or Town Board without consulting a reference tool?
- Would you recognize them if you met on the street?
- Would they recognize you?
- Do they have a library card?
- Do you know one personal, non-political thing about each one that could be used as a discussion starter?
- Do library representatives regularly attend municipal department head and/or governing board meetings?
- Do you follow municipal business as a team player who can supply needed information before it's requested?
- Does the library invite new municipal board members to a "welcome tour" of the library?