



## **Purpose and Duties of the Board**

### **1 Purpose of the Board**

The purpose of the library board is to govern the affairs of the public library in service to the community. This policy sets out the work of the library board and the ways in which the library board achieves its purpose.

- 1.1 The library board oversees the development of a comprehensive and efficient public library service by:
  - a. developing and expressing the library board's philosophy and values
  - b. articulating mission, service priorities and long-term strategy
  - c. setting policies on governance and service
  - d. planning for further library development
  - e. delegating authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and evaluating their performance
  - f. providing direction to the CEO through board motions, policies and plans
  - g. providing feedback to the CEO through a performance appraisal process
  - h. securing the resources to achieve the intended results
  - i. exercising financial control
  - j. advocating for library service
  - k. evaluating results and assessing outcomes and impact

### **2 Duties of the Entire Board**

- 2.1 The library board governs effectively by:
  - a. setting an annual library board agenda that reflects current goals and strategic issues
  - b. working proactively and making decisions that focus on the library's future and place in the community representing the interests of the community
  - c. providing opportunities for board development and training
  - d. working effectively as a team

- e. working collaboratively with the CEO and the council
- f. evaluating the board's performance, as led by the vice chair
- g. engaging the community in determining responsive and dynamic library service
- h. behaving with integrity

### **3 Duties of Individual Board Members**

The library board expects its members to understand the extent of their authority and to use it appropriately. This policy sets out the obligations of individual board members. While an individual board member has several responsibilities, outside of a meeting of the library board they have no authority to make decisions.

- 3.1 Each board member is expected to become a productive participant in exercising the duties of the board as a whole.
- 3.2 Individual members of the library board are responsible for exercising a **Duty of Diligence** as follows:
  - a. be informed of legislation under which the library exists, board bylaws, mission, vision and values
  - b. be informed about the activities of the library and the community and issues that affect the library
  - c. be prepared for all board meetings
  - d. attend board meetings regularly, contribute from personal and professional experience, and use meeting time productively
- 3.3 Individual members of the library board are responsible for exercising a **Duty of Loyalty**, as follows:
  - a. adhere to the regulations of the ***Municipal Conflict of Interest Act***. R.S.O. 1990, c. M50
  - b. act in the interest of the library members and community over and above other interest group involvement, membership on other boards, council or personal interest
  - c. speak with "one voice" once a decision is reached and a resolution is passed by the library board
  - d. represent the library positively to the community
- 3.4 Individual members of the library board are responsible for exercising a **Duty of Care**, as follows:
  - a. promote a high level of library service
  - b. consider information gathered in preparation for decision making

- c. offer personal perspective and opinions on issues that are subject to library board discussion and decisions
  - d. show respect for the opinions of others
  - e. assume no authority to make decisions outside of board meetings
  - f. know and respect the distinction in the roles of the library board with regard to governance and the employees, management and operations
  - g. refrain from individually directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the employees
  - h. respect the confidential nature of library service to users while being aware of, and in compliance with, applicable laws governing freedom of information
  - i. resist censorship of library materials by groups or individuals
- 3.5 Board members will review and follow the *Guelph Public Library Board Code of Conduct* (see **Appendix A**).

**Related Documents:**

- Guelph Public Library. **B1 – Statement of Authority and Powers of the Board**
- Guelph Public Library **G4 – Policy Development**
- Guelph Public Library **G5 – Planning**
- Guelph Public Library **G6 – Financial Control and Oversight**
- Guelph Public Library **G7 – Board Advocacy**
- Guelph Public Library **G8 - Board-CEO Partnership**
- **Municipal Conflict of Interest Act**, R.S.O. 1990, c. M50

**Notes:**

11/2020 - GPL modifies Section 2 (f) to indicate that the board evaluation is led by one of the vice chairs.

## **Appendix A:**

### **4 Board Code of Conduct**

Within the framework of the Guelph Public Library Policy G-01 it is the duty of library board members to maintain high ethical standards. This commitment includes the proper use of authority, appropriate decorum in group and individual behaviour and respect for others and their contributions to the library. As such:

#### **4.1 Respect**

Within the framework of the legislative and policy requirements of the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Workplace Harassment and Discrimination and the Prevention of Workplace Violence Policies, members will fulfill their responsibilities in ensuring that the Library is free from discrimination and harassment. No member shall:

- a. speak disrespectfully of any member of the board, staff or volunteers.
- b. use offensive words in meetings of the board or against any Member.
- c. speak in a manner that is discriminatory in nature based on an individual's age, colour, ancestry, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity/expression, sex, or sexual orientation.

#### **4.2 Board Meetings**

With the understanding that library board meetings are public and that their behavior affects the image of the Guelph Public Library, board members shall:

- a. Not speak on any subject other than the subject in debate.
- b. Not disobey the decision of the Chair or of the Board on questions of order or procedure or upon the interpretation of the rules of the Board

#### **4.3 Attendance**

Board members are expected to attend all regular board meetings and other scheduled meetings. Members are expected to inform the CEO of an anticipated absence from a regular or other scheduled meeting.

When balanced representation or effective handling of board business is affected by a member's frequent absences at board meetings or committee meetings, the chair of the board may discuss the problem with the member and may report this to the board. The board may decide to request that City Council replace the member.

#### 4.4 Use of Library Property and Resources

Members will only use Library facilities, equipment, supplies, services or other resources for the business of the library.

#### 4.5 Privacy and Confidential Information

Members will respect the privacy of others and will not disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position within the library. Members will maintain this obligation even after leaving the Board.

#### 4.6 Conflict of Interest

Within the legislative framework of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, Board members will act in the public interest and not engage in conflicts of interest, either apparent and real. The duties and responsibilities to the Library should not compete with private interests, financial or otherwise and the interests of family, friends or associated organizations.

Board members may not be employed by the Guelph Public Library. Board members must not use their positions to obtain employment with the Guelph Public Library for family members or close associates.

Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over any facet of the Guelph Public Library, the CEO, or other employees except as explicitly set forth in Board policies.

Members will not accept payments to make referrals or to act as a paid agent before the Board or Board Committee.

#### 4.7 Political Neutrality

Members will not use Library facilities, equipment, supplies, services (including staff services) or any other resources for election campaign or campaign-related activities.

Members will not use a position of authority at the Library to compel staff or volunteers to engage in partisan political activities.

#### 4.8 Gifts

Members will not accept or provide any gift or benefit where it may be, or perceived to be, in exchange for favour or influence.

Exceptions:

- Small gifts (cards or edibles, such as chocolates or cookies)

- Advertising material (calendars, scratch pads, pens, t-shirts)
- Any hospitality or gift that has a monetary value under \$100

**Notes:**

11/2020 - GPL adds to the OLS Trillium Board Code of Conduct two clauses related to attendance:

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