



Collingwood Public Library

Policy Type: **Governance**

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Policy Title: **Library Board Governance**

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

Section 1: Purpose and Duties of the Board

Purpose of the Board

The Board oversees the development of a comprehensive and efficient public library service by:

- a) Developing and expressing the Board's philosophy and values
- b) Articulating the library's vision, mission and priorities
- c) Evaluating results of activities and services used to achieve goals
- d) Setting policies on governance and service
- e) Delegating authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for management of library operations, and evaluating their performance
- f) **Providing direction to the CEO through board motions, policies, and plans**
- g) Planning for further library development
- h) Securing the financial resources to achieve the intended results
- i) Advocating for library service
- j) Exercising financial control

Duties of the Entire Board

The Board governs effectively by:

- a) Engaging the community in determining responsive and dynamic library service
- b) Working collaboratively with the CEO and the Council
- c) Working proactively and making decisions that focus on the library's future and place in the community
- d) **Working effectively as a team and behaving with integrity**
- e) **Holding all meetings in public unless closed for a special purpose within the framework of Section 16.1 of the Public Libraries Act**
- f) Evaluating the Board's performance
- g) Providing opportunities for Board development and training



Duties of Individual Board Members

The Collingwood Public Library Board expects its members to understand the extent of their authority and to use it appropriately. While an individual board member has several responsibilities, outside of a meeting of the Library Board, they have no authority to make decisions.

1. Each board member is expected to be a productive participant in exercising the duties of the Board as a whole.
2. Individual members of the 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) Attend board meetings regularly and contribute from a personal, professional, and life experience to the work of the Board
 - d) Be prepared for all Board meetings and use meeting time productively
3. Individual members of the 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 Board
 - d) Represent the library positively to the community
4. Individual members of the 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 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 board regarding governance and the staff regarding management and operations
 - g) Refrain from individually directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the staff
 - 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
5. Board members will review and follow the Collingwood Code of Conduct for Members of Council, Committees, and Local Boards.

Duties of Board Committees

The Collingwood Public Library Board may use ad hoc committees to further the work of the Board. The Board will establish terms of reference and specific duties for each of these committees, as the need arises.

1. Committees report directly to the Board and have no authority other than to research a topic, draft recommendations, or prepare alternatives for the Board's consideration and possible adoption.
2. Committees operate for defined periods of time and have a specific purpose which must be defined in written terms of reference so that members understand the work of said committee.
3. An ad hoc committee that is established by the Board may include non-board members.
4. **Under the Public Libraries Act (Section 16.1), all committee meetings must be open to the public when at least 50% of the committee members are also members of the Library Board.**
5. Meetings of committees may be called by the chair of the committee or by a majority of the members of a committee.
6. Committees shall not supervise or direct staff.

Section 2: Board Orientation

To be effective, library board members must have sufficient knowledge of board governance and issues that are central to the role of the library in the community.

Onboarding

1. Board members shall be given a thorough orientation within two months of their appointment to the Board.



2. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) shall be responsible for developing an agenda to provide an orientation which shall include, but not be limited to:
 - a) Information on the library's vision, mission and values
 - b) An overview of the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44
 - c) An overview of the board bylaws and governance policies
 - d) A discussion on the role, structure, code of conduct and function of the board
 - e) A tour of the library and an introduction to staff members and services

3. Each board member will receive:
 - a) The current Collingwood Public Library Policy Manual
 - b) The library's current planning document
 - c) A copy of the current budget
 - d) An application for library membership (if not currently a member)
 - e) A copy of the Public Libraries Act R.S.O. 1990
 - f) A copy of the Library Board Orientation Kit (Ontario Library Services)
 - g) A copy of Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance (Ontario Library Boards' Association)

4. Board members will receive training on the accessibility standards set out in the Regulations of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act, including training on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

Ongoing Training

Ongoing training ensures that library board members focus on good governance, strategic directions and policy implications rather than on operational details.

1. The library board will receive information from the CEO about training and networking offered by various organizations in Ontario.
2. The cost of any training must be approved by the Library Board before it is undertaken.
3. Board members will report on their participation in training events.
4. Board members are encouraged to participate in training opportunities that include, but are not limited to, effective governance, planning, advocacy, funding development, and decision making.

Section 3: Policy Development

The Board has the sole authority and responsibility for establishing policies, which set the framework for the governance and operations of the library and provide direction to Board and



staff. Board members and staff are responsible for knowing, understanding and complying with the policies of the Collingwood Public Library.

Types of Policies

1. The Board develops and maintains policies in five areas:
 - a) Foundation policies, which record the Board's decisions on vision, mission, and values
 - b) Board bylaws, which establish the organizational structure of the Board and how it does business
 - c) Governance policies, which define the responsibilities and regulate the work of the Board
 - d) Operational policies, which regulate the services and day-to-day operations of the library
 - e) Human Resources policies, which guide relations with the staff, and the library's relationship with the municipality's Human Resources department

Responsibilities

1. The proposed development of a new policy or revision of an existing policy can come from several sources:
 - a) The Chief Executive Officer
 - b) A member of the board
 - c) Council
 - d) Provincial government through legislative requirements
 - e) A member of the community
2. The Library CEO will develop new policies as needed or draft revisions to existing policies for Board approval.
3. The Library Board is responsible for monitoring policies and will:
 - a) Establish a schedule to review existing policies **to ensure that all policies are reviewed at a minimum every four years or as required by legislation**
 - b) Ensure that policies comply with the Public Libraries Act, any applicable municipal bylaws, provincial and federal legislation.

Policy Approval

1. The Library Board is responsible for approval of all library policies and will:
 - a) Receive all policy changes, in draft, prior to the next scheduled board meeting
 - b) Introduce a new policy or policy change through a motion at a duly constituted board meeting
 - c) Approve all policies at a duly constituted board meeting



2. Wherever practical, related information will be contained in the same policy. When new circumstances require additional policy development, the goal will be to update existing policies without adding new ones. **It is possible that two or more policies may be consolidated into one updated policy, which will be noted during the approval process.**
3. As necessary, a policy may be removed with Board approval from the suite of Collingwood Public Library policies.
4. From time to time, a policy may be removed from the suite of Collingwood Public Library policies and should be done with Board approval.

Policy Distribution

1. All policies should be documented in a standard format, numbered according to policy type and include the date of approval and the date of the next review.
2. Approved policies will be available in print in the Collingwood Public Library Policy Manual, which can be found in the Administration Office at the library.
3. All board members and staff have access to the policy manual.
4. Approved foundational and operational policies are available on the library's website.

Section 4: Planning

The Board shall maintain an effective planning process for the library in order to fulfill its mandate under the Public Libraries Act to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community's unique needs.

1. The planning process ensures that:
 - a) The library is able to respond to changing needs and trends in the community
 - b) Key decision makers in the community make a long-term commitment to library services
 - c) Services available elsewhere in the community are not unnecessarily duplicated
 - d) Library funds are responsibly expended in a deliberate and accountable manner
 - e) Continuity of services is maintained regardless of personnel changes in the Board or staff
2. To this end, the Board shall:
 - a) Develop a formal planning document that includes the mission and vision statements, and priorities

- b) Develop a cycle for reviewing and assessing:
 - i. client needs in the community served by the library
 - ii. the services of the library in the light of client needs and feedback
 - iii. current board strategic planning documents, including mission, vision, goals, and objectives
 - iv. the priorities of the municipality
 - c) Report to the community on the library's progress in fulfilling its plan by means of:
 - i. distribution of an annual report,
 - ii. presentations to Council, service groups, and community organizations.
3. Reviewing and assessing the library's current environment will be addressed through a situational analysis which may include:
- a) **Community analysis** - A range of community-related information with possible implications for library service, including demographic data, municipal planning documents, and information on local agencies and services, is gathered and formally analyzed at least once every four years, and the results used in the planning of library service.
 - b) **Consultation with users** - Library users are consulted regularly concerning library services (e.g. by means of surveys, focus groups, formal and informal interviews, open houses, suggestion box, website, etc.). The library ensures that the invitation to comment and the feedback process are accessible to persons with disabilities by providing or arranging for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports, upon request.

Section 5: Advocacy

The Board must ensure that the community is aware of the importance of the library and that funding bodies fully understand the important role which the library plays in the community.

1. In pursuing its advocacy activities, the board shall:
 - a) Prepare an annual advocacy plan
 - b) Inform Council of the needs of the community, the development of library services, plans and achievements by means of reports
 - c) Participate regularly in activities that build relationships with individuals and organizations that share interests with those of the Collingwood Public Library
 - d) Identify and respond to issues, concerns, and government policies that may directly or indirectly affect the Collingwood Public Library and ensure that government decision-makers at all levels are aware of the value of the library and its benefit to individuals and to the community



2. All board members are encouraged to promote the value of the Collingwood Public Library and its impact on the community. This is done by:
 - a) Sharing stories and relevant information about library programs, services, and impact
 - b) Sharing information about the Board's values, vision, and strategic plans
 - c) Being an ambassador for the library and utilizing the Board's advocacy plan
 - d) Respecting the appropriate level of confidentiality for issues of a sensitive nature and understand that it is the Chair's role to represent and speak on behalf of the Board
 - e) Understanding that the Board Chair and CEO are responsible for responding to media inquiries to ensure appropriate information is shared. This responsibility may be delegated to others, with the approval of the Board Chair or CEO.

Section 6: Financial Oversight

The Board is accountable to the community for the library's financial affairs. The Board must ensure adequate controls are in place to manage finances and see that the library has adequate resources to deliver service and fulfill its mission.

Accountability

1. The financial year of the Collingwood Public Library shall terminate on the 31st day of December in each year.
2. In accordance with the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44 s. 15(4b), the treasurer will open an account or accounts in the name of the library board in a chartered bank, trust company or credit union.
3. The Board, with the assistance of the treasurer, shall develop an annual operating budget showing potential revenue from all sources (province, local, donations, self-generated) and proposed expenses for library operations.
4. The Board, with assistance of the treasurer, may prepare a long-term capital budget which supports the library's approved long-term goals.
5. The Annual Operating and Capital budgets shall be approved at a meeting of the library board.

Financial Responsibilities of the CEO

1. The Library CEO will be the treasurer for the Library Board, working to maintain and report on library finances.
2. The CEO will submit a copy of the audited financial statement to the provincial Ministry responsible for libraries as part of the requirements to complete the Public Library



Operating Grant (PLOG) application, if required or upon Ministry request.

3. The CEO is authorized to operate the library within the approved library budget and shall authorize payments of all invoices and payroll within the budgeted amounts.
4. The CEO may apply for, and bind, any grants deemed appropriate for the operations of the library.
5. The CEO may accept donations of cash, in-kind, or materials to support the operations of the library.

Financial Monitoring

1. The Board monitors the finances to ensure that the ongoing financial position of the library is consistent with the priorities approved by the Board. The Board shall monitor the monthly financial report as prepared by the treasurer, at each meeting.
2. In accordance with the Public Libraries Act, the accounts of the Board shall be audited by a person appointed under section 296 of the Municipal Act and submitted to Council.
3. An audit may also be undertaken, upon the death, resignation, dismissal or other termination of the treasurer of the Board, and at such other times as the Board shall direct.

Related Documents:

Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44

Collingwood Public Library. **OP-14 Accessibility in the Library.**

Collingwood Public Library. **Library Board Bylaws.**

Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M50.

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and Ontario Regulation 165/16

Ontario Library Services. **Library Board Orientation Kit.** (2004)

Ontario Library Boards' Association. **Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance.**