

# LIBRARY BOARD

## TOOLS

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### 1. What is the job description of a Library Board Trustee?

Public Library Boards are governing boards, legal corporations with the authority to make policy and to govern the library's affairs under the **Public Libraries Act**, RSO 1990, c. P. 44.

A board's duty is to provide comprehensive, effective and efficient public library service that reflects the community's needs and builds community capacity. The stakeholders of today's libraries expect strong leadership. Consequently, modern governance must reach beyond ongoing budget oversight and a regular strategic planning exercise to embrace new ideas, and forge strong relationships that will support the library in its **Vision, Mission** and **Value Promise** to the community.

### **Responsibilities**

The primary roles of the County of Prince Edward Public Library Board are to:

- ✓ Set the vision, mission and strategic direction for the library and, using strategic planning techniques, determine a strategy map to get there;
- ✓ Make policy within the framework of government legislation and regulations;
- ✓ Oversee the library's finances in accordance with public accounting principles and requirements and within municipal budget policy and procedures;
- ✓ Monitor overall effectiveness of the library in meeting community needs in an efficient and effective manner and evaluate progress on the strategic plan;
- ✓ Set fees where allowed by the Public Libraries Act;
- ✓ Hire and evaluate a qualified Chief Executive Officer to implement the strategic plan and to manage the day to day delivery of public service and daily operations of the library; and

The Library Board has the authority to act on behalf of the library; individual board members have no authority to act on their own.

## **Values**

As a member of a library board, a trustee must act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the library. This means that the interests of the library take precedence over personal interests or those of any group with which the trustee is associated.

Trustees are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the ***County of Prince Edward Public Library Mutual Respect Policy***, which states that the County of Prince Edward Public Library believes that it is the right of all employees, Board Members, volunteers and any person having a relationship with the Library to be treated with dignity and respect. The Library is committed to providing a working environment which promotes mutual respect, provides equal opportunities and is free from harassment.

## **Trustee Roles**

Along with the governance, legal and fiscal roles, Library Board Trustees are expected to support and participate in community engagement by:

- ✓ Establishing the library as an essential community service;
- ✓ Building community pride in the library;
- ✓ Advocating the library's role in the community;
- ✓ Maintaining an open dialogue with the community;
- ✓ Building strong relationships with municipal council;
- ✓ Being aware of the municipal planning context; and
- ✓ Developing strategic partnerships with community groups and leaders.

In order to fulfill the above, the County of Prince Edward Public Library and Archives requires a well-rounded Library Board with competent, experienced trustees. The trustee's job is not an easy one: it requires the ability to work towards a vision and to think in broad, future oriented terms while maintaining a commitment to move vision to reality. This requires understanding and discussing the philosophical aspects of library service while implementing the necessary governance measure to achieve desired services. A good trustee keeps the overall vision, mission and value promise in mind while acting strategically.

The person appointed to the Library Board must be:

- ✓ A Canadian Citizen;

- ✓ At least eighteen (18) years of age;
- ✓ A resident of the County of Prince Edward; and
- ✓ Not be employed by the Library Board or the municipality.

### **Essential Competencies and Qualifications**

The essential core competencies and qualifications for a County of Prince Edward Public Library Board Trustee are:

- ✓ Conviction that the public library is essential and uniquely important to the life of all Prince Edward County residents;
- ✓ Commitment to Prince Edward County through service to the community;
- ✓ Leadership experience;
- ✓ Business acumen;
- ✓ Ability to seek and listen to input from all stakeholders;
- ✓ Ability to approach people and problems with an open mind;
- ✓ Ability to actively participate in discussion and deliberation and to attain positive outcomes; and
- ✓ Time and energy.

### **Desirable Competencies and Qualifications**

In addition to the above, based on the status of the current County of Prince Edward Public Library Board Strategic Plan and the current emerging economic environment, the Library requires a well connected, credible community leader who brings:

- ✓ A large network of varied community contacts including the business/corporate, education, public and not-for-profit sectors; and
- ✓ Success in advocating for funding and political support.

Experience in the area of fund development would be an asset.

### **Time Commitment**

The Library board holds ten (10) regular monthly meetings a year: January to June and September to December inclusive. The time commitment includes: preparation time to read and consider reports and other information in the meeting package, and the meeting time of approximately three (3) hours.

On occasion, Board Members are also required to participate in public participation meetings designed to seek public input on key library matters.

Board Members are expected to represent the library on committees such as the Ontario Library Board Association, Southern Ontario Library Service, etc. Time commitments vary according to the committee.

Board Members may also elect to participate on “ad hoc” committees of the board which are established to deal with specific matters such as the hiring of a CEO or drafting specific policy.

### **Compensation**

Library Board Members are not compensated for time required to participate in the above activities.