



PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

What is a Library Board?

A library board is a group of citizens appointed by the local Municipal Council who are responsible for the governing of the public library. They are volunteers who serve their community with no financial compensation. Members may be reimbursed for travel and other expenses incurred in the performance of library business. The role of the library board is to act as an agent of public trust. It is responsible for ensuring the library is properly managed, but does not itself manage. The CEO/Chief Librarian is responsible for internal management and daily operation of the library.

Key Library Board responsibilities are:

- Selects and evaluates the CEO/Chief Librarian of the library;
- Establishes operating and administrative policies to govern the operation and programs of the library;
- Determines the goals and objectives for the library and secure adequate funds to fulfill those goals;
- Understands the needs of the community in relation to the Library and create a link between the community and library services;
- Promotes the library to the community and Municipal Council and advocates on its behalf;
- Oversees the budget process, with the understanding that Council has final approval for the library budget, which forms part of Municipality of Grey Highlands's consolidated budget.

What are the qualifications for Library Board members?

Each Board member will bring to the Board individual strengths, skills, talents and experiences to effectively serve the library. A Board representing a broad spectrum of community interests and occupations, with diverse viewpoints, ensures that the library will serve the total community.

The Public Libraries Act requires a Library Board member to be:

- A Canadian citizen
- A resident of the municipality for which the board is established; the Municipality of Grey Highlands
- Not employed by the Library Board or municipality
- At least eighteen years old

An effective board member should have:

- Respect for the institution; understanding of the importance of the library and its role in the community
- Openness to others' views; ability to work as a member of the team and participate in discussions
- Persistence, sound judgment, a sense of fiscal responsibility, and initiative
- Friendly relaxed manner; have connections and affiliations with the Community

- A passion for good governance; have a sense of accountability to the Community
- Knowledge of the Library's strategic plan
- Desire to improve Library services, understand the long term nature of Library goals
- Transparency and integrity; must not be motivated by personal crusades or issues
- Ability to make time for the job, training, staying on top of issues, and participating in meetings and committees Grey Highlands Public Library Board
- Self-confidence and assurance to develop important perspectives on critical topics like intellectual freedom, literacy, library finances and the appropriate role of a Board member. Ideally, the Board will have some members with demonstrated skills, interests, and experience in:
 - ✓ Financial Management
 - ✓ Public Sector Governance
 - ✓ Community Service
 - ✓ Facilities Design and Management

Board Governance and Operations

The Board, governed by the Public Libraries Act, and with the CEO/Chief Librarian and Library staff manages an annual operating budget of \$487,403 (2018). The majority of the operating budget comes from the Grey Highlands Municipality Council through the municipal tax base. The rest comes from provincial grants and miscellaneous sources. The Grey Highlands Municipality Council has final approval over the Library's budget. In 2016, the Board developed a new Strategic Plan covering the years 2017 to 2020.

What commitment is required?

The term of a Library Board member is four years and runs concurrently with the term of Municipal Council. Meetings of the Grey Highlands Public Library Board occur monthly on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. The time commitment includes preparation to read and consider reports and other information in the meeting package and the meeting time of approximately 2-3 hours.

Remuneration - Board members are not paid but do receive remuneration for Board related expenses (mileage).

Meetings - The Library Board meets at one of the branches of the Grey Highlands Public Library on the evening of the third Wednesday of each month (except for July and August). Members will serve on Library committees, liaise with community groups, and represent the library at various events. Members belong to the Ontario Library Boards' Association, which holds annual conferences and sponsors other developmental activities.

The Library covers membership fees.

Membership

The Grey Highlands Public Library Board, appointed by Municipal Council Board consists of at least five (5), and up to 9 members:

- Two members of Council;
- 3 to 7 citizens of the municipality of the Municipality of Grey Highlands who are over eighteen, have no criminal record, are a Canadian citizen, and who meet the requirements as outlined above;

It is the desire of the Grey Highlands Public Library Board to have a broad level of representation on the Board in support of the Grey Highlands Public Library Strategic Plan, including representatives from the following areas: Youth, seniors, small business, and newcomers.

FAQ's

Where can I get more details about the rules and regulations that govern public libraries and library boards?

In Ontario, the legal framework around libraries and library boards is contained within the Public Libraries Act (PLA) under the Ministry of Culture, Tourism, and Sport.

[A summary of the Public Libraries Act can be found here](#)

A link to the actual legislation governing libraries, including the PLA, can be found at: <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/legislation.shtml>

General information about Ontario's public libraries can be found at: www.ontario.ca/libraries

In addition, there are a number of Acts and Regulations with which public Libraries must comply, such as the Occupational Health and Safety Act, the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, the Copyright Act, and Federal/Provincial Tax Acts.

Does the Library Board deal with day to day management of the Library?

No. The Library Board's main role is to set strategic goals for the Library and to allocate resources and monitor the Library's progress towards those goals. All of this occurs within a framework of policies the Board establishes that govern how the Library functions. This is referred to as "Board Governance."

While the Library Board oversees all aspects of the Library and has the responsibility to investigate and understand any situations or issues where the Library may not be in compliance with the policy framework or legislation governing Libraries, the day-to-day management of the Library is the responsibility of the CEO/Chief Librarian and Library staff.

The CEO is the only employee of the Library Board. Library staff report to the CEO and the CEO reports to the Library Board. The Library Board acts "through" the CEO by putting the responsibility for the performance of the Library on the shoulders of the CEO. The CEO then decides how to structure their staff and how to meet the strategic goals set by the Library Board. In the event the Library is not meeting its strategic goals or is found to be non-compliant with the policy framework or legislative framework, then the Library Board addresses this with the CEO and decides if any disciplinary measures are necessary.

More questions?

We encourage you to contact the Board Chair- brihen1@gmail.com , or the CEO/Chief Librarian contact@greyhighlands.ca, and request that a Board member contact you to answer your questions.

Strategic Plan 2017 - 2020

GREY HIGHLANDS PUBLIC LIBRARY



**GREY HIGHLANDS
PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The place to connect, explore and learn

Introduction

The community of Grey Highlands, like many parts of rural Ontario, has experienced change in its people, their needs and priorities. The Library at the same time is both a facilitator and respondent to community transformation. This continuous dynamic must filter and shape the reading and implementation of this plan.

In 2016 the Library Board and staff engaged in a strategic planning process to identify the future of our Library and to determine our priorities for service improvement and expansion.

We endeavored to connect with community stakeholders and residents- both users and non-users of the Library. We gathered information to understand community needs to help inform our thinking as we developed a strategy for the future. It is a future that embraces change predicated on new technologies, evolving communities and shifting values and lifestyles – all with significant implications for public library service delivery.

Community Consultation Survey - 2017

Summary: During the latter part of July through October 2017, the library collected responses to a library survey (online and hard copy) that probed general views about their expectations and needs for library services. A series of questions was asked about library usage, access to services, the importance of various services offered, the impact of technology, barriers to use, and satisfaction with customer service standards. Extensive “other comments” were volunteered by respondents and are also reflected in this plan.

Mission & Vision

Mission Statement

To engage and empower through innovative and integrated library and cultural programs, service and information.

Vision Statement

Your place to connect, explore and learn.

2017-2020 Priorities

CUSTOMER FIRST

Be a model for
responsive and
innovative service

- Increase community engagement (focus groups and follow-up surveys, for unrepresented demographics)
 - Enhance communications (newsletters, marketing, social media)
 - Review library hours of operation at all branches
 - Review facilities (seating, reading and service areas, work spaces)
 - Provide staff with relevant and applicable skills and training (technology, customer service)
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2017-2020 Priorities (continued)

TECH FRIENDLY

Respond proactively to technology needs and opportunities

- Update and review Technology Plan (computer and connectivity needs, funding opportunities, training workshops)
- Review and enhance virtual services (web site, social media, policies, and e-resources – online databases, audio/e-books, digital collections)
- Explore and assess makerspace models in relationship to community need and feasibility

2017-2020 Priorities (continued)

SERVICE GROWTH

Strengthen the current service provisions and resources based on the needs identified in our 2017 community survey and ongoing surveys and focus groups

- Increase/develop programming that reflect current interests and needs of the community (technology, cultural, literacy)
- Strengthen collections (collection development strategies/practices)
- Capability planning (review organizational structure, volunteers, friends)
- Explore relationships with other libraries and community partners (outreach)

2017-2020 Priorities (continued)

CULTURAL LEADERSHIP

Continue our role as a municipal cultural leader; Be a model for cultural leadership; Be recognized as community hubs where culture happens

- Affirm our leadership role in community and cultural planning
- Respond to partnership opportunities with other cultural groups and municipal departments
- Increase content, variety and exposure relating to the Cultural Channel
- Host cultural roundtables with our municipal partners

Understanding Ontario's Public Libraries Act

Some Key Aspects



“A library outranks any one thing a community can do to benefit its people. It is a never failing spring in the desert.” – Andrew Carnegie (1835-1919)



Libraries and a Prosperous Community

A strong library system is a cornerstone of a strong community. It contributes to education, literacy and life-long learning for Ontario residents.

Achieving Equality and Universal Access

Ontario's Public Libraries Act (PLA) is the key piece of legislation governing Ontario's public libraries. It supports the provision of equal and universal access to information and establishes free public library services in Ontario through governance and regulations.

Library Boards

Under the PLA, public libraries in Ontario must be operated under the management and control of a public library board. The board has the authority to formulate policies concerning the operations and services of the public library.

Once established by municipal by-law, a public library board is responsible for the operation of its library system. Boards and municipalities should work in cooperation toward common goals.

Under the PLA municipalities can:

- appoint members of the library board for the same term as Council
- give or withhold consent regarding real estate property
- annually approve the board's estimates of all sums required by the board
- make a grant in money, lands or buildings to a library board

Public, Union and County Library Boards

Public library boards are composed of at least five members. The number of municipal councillors on the board may not exceed one less than a majority.

Union public library boards are established when two or more municipalities agree on creating a union library. Once again, councillors on a union board must not exceed one less than a majority.

County public library boards are established when at least two-thirds of a county's municipalities request that the county establish a county library. The appointing council cannot appoint more of its own members to a board than the number that is a bare majority of the board.

Boards: Powers and Duties

Boards provide:

- a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the unique needs of the community they serve, in co-operation with other boards;
- French language and special services as appropriate; and
- services in accordance with the PLA.

Boards are required to:

- fix times and places for board meetings, call and conduct them and ensure full and correct minutes are kept; and
- supply an annual report to the Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, along with any other reports and any other information required by the PLA or by the Minister from time to time.

Board Member Eligibility

A board member must be:

- a member of the appointing council; or
- a Canadian citizen;
- at least eighteen years old;
- a resident of the municipality where the board is established or – in the case of a county library cooperative board – the area served by the board, as long they are not an employee of the board or the municipality ;
- a resident of a municipality or a local services board area that contracts with the library board for service;
- a member of an Indian Band that has a contract with the library board for service; or
- a person who is a member of a second board that has entered into a contract with the board to purchase library services for the residents of the second board.

CEO Appointments

A public library board has the power to appoint a library chief executive officer (CEO). The CEO is a library board employee and not a municipal employee. The CEO reports to the board and not to the municipality. The CEO does not report in a dual relationship to both the board and the municipality.

Library Finances

The PLA requires public library boards to appoint a treasurer who:

- receives and accounts for all the board's money;
- opens an account or accounts in the name of the board in a chartered bank, trust company or credit union approved by the board;
- deposits all monies received by the board to the credit of the board's account; and
- disburses the money as the board directs.

The municipality has the right to administer board finances. For example, a municipality can periodically transfer funds from the public library bank account to a municipal bank account to pay public library board bills. In such cases, the library board remains responsible for public library operations and services – including finances – but delegates day-to-day financial administration to the municipality.

Fees

Under the PLA a board cannot charge for:

- admission to a public library
- for the in-library use of materials
- reserving and borrowing circulating materials and the use of reference and information services the board considers practicable.
- the use of inter-library loan services, as long as the materials borrowed fall within the classes of materials prescribed under the PLA.

Fees cannot be imposed for the use or borrowing of:

- books
- periodicals
- newspapers
- audio materials designed for the handicapped
- sound recordings
- audio and video cassettes
- tape recordings
- video discs
- motion pictures
- film strips
- film loops
- micro materials in all formats
- computer software
- multi-media kits

A board may impose fees for:

- services not referred to under the Act;
- the use of the parts of a building that are not being used for public library purposes; and
- the use of library services by persons who do not reside in the area of the board's jurisdiction.

First Nation Public Libraries

First Nation bands can establish their own public library. They may also contract for public library services with a public library board, union board or county library board. Library services are provided according to the terms and conditions set out in the agreement.

Disclaimer

This pamphlet is intended to help Ontario's public library stakeholder understand the general principles behind the establishment, administration and funding of public libraries as set out in the Act. The information contained in this pamphlet is not legal advice. For further questions relating to the PLA or your particular circumstances, you must consult with your own legal advisors.

For further information

Visit the ministry's website: www.ontario.ca/libraries

Visit Ontario's e-Laws website: ontario.ca/q018

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