

Public Library Board Recruitment

2018 MUNICIPAL ELECTIONS

2018 AMO CONFERENCE

Appointing library board members

The municipal council appoints library board members for a term concurrent with the appointing council. Municipalities may work with current library boards to ensure that candidates applying for library board positions are representative of the

community and can fulfill its governance responsibilities.

The board's main roles are to make policy, to set the mission and direction of the library, to ensure adequate resources are in place, and to ensure an effective chief executive officer is hired to manage the public library.

For additional information about public library governance, refer to the Ontario Library Boards' Association's [Cut to the Chase](#).

The board represents the community

The board represents the owners of the library who are the community residents. It is the board's fiduciary duty to ensure that decisions made about library programs and services are in the best interests of the library and the community served.

It is important that the board has the right skills, knowledge, and

experience to fulfill its governance role.

Consider some of the following reasons for library boards to be involved in recruitment:

1. **Stewardship:**
The board's role is to govern the library in the best interests of the community it represents.
2. **Accountability:**
The board is accountable

to the municipality, the province, and the community it represents.

3. **Continuity:**
The board is responsible for ensuring future access to quality library services.
4. **Challenge:**
A library must keep up with new technologies and access to information and determine how the library will best provide access to the patrons it serves.

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The board recruitment posting

Municipalities recruit citizens to municipal board positions. In the event that an application form is not available, consider adapting this posting for your community.

“THE TRILLIUM
PUBLIC LIBRARY’S
MISSION IS TO
ENRICH CITIZENS
LIVES BY
PROVIDING
OPPORTUNITIES
TO EXPLORE,
CONNECT,
CREATE, LEARN
AND GROW.”

The Town of Trillium is Now Accepting Applications for Appointment to the Trillium Public Library Board.

The Trillium Public Library provides community access to information and resources that improve quality of life, foster lifelong learning, encourage community involvement, and meet the educational and social needs of community members, within available resources. The Board is committed to providing the best possible library experience to its community.

The Trillium Public Library’s mission is to enrich citizens lives by providing opportunities to explore, connect, create, learn and grow.

Six board member positions are available beginning January 2019.

Applications must be in writing and should address the following points:

- Why are you interested in serving on the Trillium Public Library Board?
- What do you see as the role of the library board?
- What skills and interests do you have that you feel would be useful to the board?
- Please describe your specific experience with community boards and committees and affiliations.
- Would you be able to spend 4-6 hours a month on the library board’s business?

Applications and FAQs are available on our website and at all library branches.

Applications will be accepted until date and time.

Additional information about the Trillium Public Library is available on their website: URL

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Tips in board recruitment

The public library CEO and board may have information available that may be used for board recruitment, e.g., mission statement, duties and responsibilities of library board members, desired competencies of new members, and a job description.

Speak with the library board chair about the board

recruitment process and what information is needed to assist you in appointing new members.

Inform the board chair whether council is open to recommendations for the vacant positions.

The municipality advertises vacancies locally in English and in French, as is

appropriate, before municipal elections so appointments are made promptly (Public Libraries Act, Section 11).

Council appoints the new board at the first meeting of council or within 60 days of its first meeting (Public Libraries Act, Section 10 (4)).

A library board legacy document

The existing public library board may have a legacy document created for the incoming board which may include some or all of the following components:

- Successes and challenges for the library and the board

- The role of the library in the community and the library's community partners
- Outstanding issues or areas of concern for the current board
- Board development

activities in which the board has participated and suggestions for future activities

- Future trends for the library and board to consider

THE PUBLIC
LIBRARIES ACT
DEFINES THE
GOVERNANCE
OF PUBLIC
LIBRARIES IN
ONTARIO.

Library board member qualifications

The Public Libraries Act R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER P.44 defines the governance of public libraries in Ontario. According to the Act, a person is qualified to be appointed as a member of a board who is

- a member of the appointing council

- at least eighteen years old
- a Canadian citizen
- a resident of the municipality for which the board is established
- is not employed by the board or by the municipality.

In the case of a public library board or union board, the appointing council shall not appoint more than one less than a majority of the board; and in the case of a county library or a county co-operative library, a bare majority of the board. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 10 (2).

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Competencies for prospective board members

What type of board member is needed by your library? Use this checklist to identify the right candidates for your library board.

- Belief in the value of the library in the community
- Commitment to the community
- Community development and engagement
- Community representation
- Creativity
- Ethics and integrity
- Experience serving on volunteer boards or advisory committees
- Good communication skills
- Good decision making skills
- Interested in advocating on behalf of the library
- Interested in learning about the broader library community
- Interpersonal skills
- Knowledge of the community's social and economic conditions
- Leadership abilities
- Open to continuous learning
- Organizational skills
- Policy development
- Strategic thinking and planning
- Time and energy

LIBRARY BOARDS REQUIRE A VARIETY OF SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES.

What additional skills and knowledge are helpful to the board?

- Business
- Education and literacy
- Financial planning and management
- Human resources
- Information technology
- Labour relations
- Legal expertise
- Management experience
- Marketing and public relations
- Risk management
- Stakeholder engagement
- Succession planning

Library board member job description

Public library boards are governing boards, that is, legal corporations with the authority to make policy and to govern the library's affairs under the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44.

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Here is a sample library board member's job description

Public library boards are governing boards, that is, legal corporations with the authority to make policy and to govern the library's affairs under the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 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. Today's libraries need strong leadership. Governance must include ongoing budget oversight and a focus on future thinking to plan for a library that delivers on its vision and mission for the community.

Responsibilities

- To provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community's needs.
- To make policies to govern library operations within the framework of government legislation and regulations. Establish a regular review cycle for library policy.
- To hire and evaluate a competent and qualified CEO who manages the daily operations of the library in accordance with library policy.
- To define the library's vision, mission, and strategic direction and to secure adequate funding to achieve these goals.
- To work with the CEO to prepare a budget to meet the library's goals and objectives and to present this budget to municipal council.
- To delegate authority and resources to the staff to run the library.
- To practice due diligence. Be aware of local and other laws that affect library services.
- To be able to demonstrate the

accountability and integrity of the board through its planning documents, budgets, policies, and practices.

- To monitor and report regularly on the library's effectiveness to governing officials and the community.
- To act as a bridge between the library and the municipal council and between the library and the community.
- To participate in professional development.
- To develop a succession plan and policy.
- To assess board performance regularly.

Only the board has the authority to act on behalf of the library. Individual board members have no authority to act on their own.

Desirable Qualifications

- Commitment, belief in the community and in the public library as an essential community service.
- Knowledge of the community's social and economic conditions.
- Aptitude for planning, organizational skills, and creativity.

- Good communication skills. Willingness to discuss issues fully, listen to opposing viewpoints, and make reasoned decisions.
- Willingness to seek and listen to input from community members and community organizations.
- Ability to advocate on behalf of the library.
- Willingness to build your knowledge and understanding of the broader library community.
- Willingness to devote time and energy.
- Be open to continuous learning.
- Have internet access for emails and reports.
- **Relevant Experience**
- Experience serving on volunteer boards or advisory committees.
- Demonstrated leadership abilities.

Time Commitment

- Prepare for and attend regular and special meetings of the library board. The board holds ten regular monthly meetings a year: January to June and September to December.

The time commitment includes preparation time to read and carefully consider reports and other information in the meeting package and a monthly meeting of approximately two hours.

- Board members may be expected to participate on board committees which are established to deal with specific issues such as planning, policy review, or hiring of the CEO.
- Board members may be asked to represent the library at public meetings, library events, and community events.
- Board members may be expected to participate in professional development including workshops, webinars, and conferences which may be offered virtually, locally or provincially.

References

OLBA, Cut to the Chase. <http://www.accessola.org/web/Documents/OLA/Divisions/OLBA/Cut-to-the-Chase-ENG.pdf>

Board recruitment posting. Adapted from the Ajax Public Library. Used with permission. 2015.

Tips in the board recruitment process. Adapted from: Trustee Tips September 2003 Issue No. 24. Library Board Recruitment 2003.

Public Libraries Act R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER P.44. <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/legislation.shtml>

**A Visit
Will Get You
Thinking.**



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