
St. Marys Public Library



Policy Type: **Governance Policy**

Policy Number: **GOV-01**

Policy Title: **Purpose and Duties of the Board**

Policy Approval Date:

Policy Review Date:

1. Objective

- 1.1 To be effective, Library Board members must have sufficient knowledge of the purpose and duties they are responsible for performing. The Library Board is appointed, and functions in accordance with *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O.1990, c. P44, the Constitution of the Board, and with current Library accepted policies and practices. The purpose of the Library Board is to govern the affairs of the public library in service to the community.

2. Policy Statement

- 2.1 This policy sets out the work of the Library Board and the ways in which the Library Board achieves its purpose; and
- 2.2 This policy outlines the Code of Conduct for members of the Board to follow.

3. Purpose of the Board

- 3.1 The Library Board oversees the development of a comprehensive and efficient Public Library and Adult Learning services 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 services;
 - d. Planning for further Library/Adult Learning development;
 - e. Delegating authority to the Chief Executive Officer, and evaluating his/her performance;
 - f. Securing the resources to achieve the intended results;
 - g. Exercising financial control over both Library and Adult Learning budgets;
 - h. Advocating for Library service;
 - i. Advocating for Adult Learning service; and
 - j. Evaluating results and assessing outcomes and impacts.

4. Duties of the Entire Board

- 4.1 The Library Board governs effectively by:
- a. Working proactively and making decisions that focus on the Library's and Adult Learning's future and place within the community, representing the interests of the community as a whole;
 - b. Providing opportunities for Board Development and Training;

- c. Working effectively as a team;
- d. Working collaboratively with the CEO and St. Marys Town Council, as well as other contracted municipalities;
- e. Evaluating the Board's performance;
- f. Engaging the community in determining responsive and dynamic library services; and
- g. Behaving with integrity.

5. Duties of the Individual Board Members

- 5.1 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 he or she has no authority to make decisions on behalf of the Library Board;
- 5.2 Each Board Member is expected to become a productive participant in exercising the duties of the Board as a whole, including oversight of the Adult Learning Programs of Perth;
- 5.3 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 and the Adult Learning Programs of Perth exists, Board By-laws, mission, vision and values;
 - b. Be informed about the activities of the Library, Adult Learning, and the community, as well as issues that affect both the Library and Adult Learning;
 - c. Be prepared for all Board meetings; and
 - d. Attend Board meetings regularly, contribute from a personal and professional experience, and use meeting time productively.
- 5.4 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 and Adult Learning, 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; and
 - d. Represent the Library and Adult Learning positively to the community.
- 5.5 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 on behalf of the Board, 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 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; and
 - i. Resist censorship of Library materials by groups or individuals.
- 5.6 Board members will review and follow the St. Marys Public Library Code of Conduct (see Appendix A).

6. Related Documents

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

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

Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards, The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys By-Law 74-2018

Constitution of the Board, St. Marys Public Library By-Law-01

7. History

Date of Latest Board Approval: September 2019

Date(s) of Revision(s): N/A

Date of next scheduled review: September 2022

Appendix A: Board Code of Conduct

Within the framework of this policy for the St. Marys Public Library, and in conjunction with/accompanying “The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards”, 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 behavior and respect for others and their contributions to the Library. As such:

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 and Adult Learning Centre is free from discrimination and harassment. As such, a Board Member shall abide by the provisions of the *Human Rights Code*, and shall treat every person, including other Members, staff, individuals providing services on a contract for services and the public, with dignity, understanding and respect. No Member shall:

- Speak disrespectfully of any member of the Board, Staff, Volunteers, Council, or members of the community; and
- 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.

Board Meetings

With the understanding that Library Board meetings are public, and that their behavior affects the image of the St. Marys Public Library and Adult Learning, Board members shall:

- Conduct business while keeping focused on the subject of debate; and
- 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.

Use of Library Property and Resources

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

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. No member shall:

- Disclose, release or publish any means to any person or to the public any Confidential Information acquired by virtue of his or her tenure on the Library Board, in any form, except when required or authorized Council, Library Board or otherwise required by law to do so;
- Disclose the content of any matter that has been discussed at an in-camera (closed) meeting or the substance of deliberations until the Library Board discloses the matter at a meeting that is open to the public or otherwise releases the information to the public;
- Access or attempt to access Confidential Information in the custody of the Library Board unless it is necessary for the performance of his or her duties and not prohibited by the Library Board; and
- Shall use Confidential Information for personal or private gain or benefit, or for the personal or private gain of any other person or body.

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 or real. The duties and responsibilities to the Library and Adult Learning should not compete with private interests, financial or otherwise and the interests of family, friends or associated organizations.

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

Committee. This is outlined in further detail in “The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards”

Political Neutrality

Members will not use Library or Adult Learning 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. This is outlined further in the “Library and Political Elections Policy”

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); and
- Any hospitality or gift that has a monetary value under \$200.

For more on Gifts, refer to “The Corporation of the Town of St. Marys Code of Conduct for Members of Council and Local Boards”