

---

*West Perth Public Library is a welcoming space  
where everyone can explore, connect, and learn.*

## **Purpose of the Board**

## **Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members**

## **Committees of the Board**

## **Board Orientation and Training**

## **Advocacy**

## **Planning**

## **Policy Development**

## **Evaluation of the CEO**

## **Related Documents**

## **Purpose of the Board**

The purpose of the West Perth 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.

1. The Board oversees the development of a comprehensive and efficient library service by:
  - a. expressing the Library'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) and evaluating their performance;
  - f. planning for further Library development;
  - g. securing the resources to achieve the intended results;
  - h. advocating for library service.
  
2. The Board governs effectively by:
  - a. representing the interests of the community;

- b. engaging the community in determining responsive and dynamic library service;
- c. acting as a bridge between the Library and Council;
- d. working collaboratively with the CEO and the Council;
- e. setting an annual Board agenda that reflects current goals and strategic issues;
- f. working proactively and making decisions that focus on the Library's future and place in the community;
- g. evaluating the Board's performance.

### **Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members**

The West Perth Public 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.

1. Each Board member is expected to become 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 by-laws, 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 personal, professional and life experience to the work of the Board;
  - d. be prepared for all Board meetings and use meeting time effectively.
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 reach 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 and the staff;
- 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.

### **Committees of the Board**

The West Perth Public Library Board may use ad hoc committees to further the work of the Board. This policy ensures that the Board establishes 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 draft recommendations or prepare alternatives for the Board's consideration;
2. Committees operate for defined periods of time and have a specific purpose which must be defined in written Terms of Reference;
3. Ad hoc committees coordinate the work, do the research and draft the documents to be reviewed and adopted by the Board as a whole;
4. An ad hoc committee that is established by the Board may include non-Board members;
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.

### **Board Orientation and Training**

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. This policy sets out the requirements for Board orientation and ongoing training.

#### **Section 1: Orientation**

The orientation of Board members is necessary in order for there to be a common and shared understanding of the authority and role of the Board.

1. Board members shall be given a thorough orientation within two months of their appointment to the Library Board;
2. The CEO and the Board Chair 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 by-laws and governance policies;
  - d. a discussion on the purpose, structure, code of conduct and function of the Library Board;
  - e. a tour of the Library and an introduction to employees and services.
3. Each Board member will receive:
  - a. the current West Perth Public Library Policy Manual;
  - b. the Library's current planning document;
  - c. a copy and overview of the Library's annual operating plan and the current budget;
  - d. an application for Library membership;
  - e. a copy of the current legislation – *Public Libraries Act* R.S.O. 1990;
  - f. a copy of the Library Board Orientation materials prepared by the Ontario Library Service.
4. Board members will receive training on the accessibility standards set out in the Regulations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act*, 2005 including training on the *Ontario Human Rights Code* as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

## Section 2: Ongoing Training

Ongoing training ensures that Library Board members focus on good governance, strategic directions and policy implications rather than on operational details. This policy ensures that Library Board members have access to, and avail themselves of, training opportunities.

1. To ensure ongoing education the Library Board will:
  - a. schedule time for Board training whether during Board meetings or at special times;
  - b. maintain a membership in the Ontario Library Association, and budget permitting, in the Ontario Library Boards' Association;
  - c. assign a representative who will attend the regional Trustee Council meetings and report back to the Library Board;
  - d. budget permitting, fund two Board members to attend a relevant conference annually.

2. The CEO will provide information about training and networking opportunities;
3. The cost of any training must be approved by the Library Board before it is undertaken;
4. Board members will report on their participation in training events;
5. At the beginning of their term, the Library Board will review sections of the Library Board materials prepared by the Ontario Library Service;
6. Board members are encouraged to participate in training opportunities including but not limited to:
  - a. effective governance;
  - b. planning;
  - c. advocacy;
  - d. funding development;
  - e. decision making.

## **Advocacy**

The Library 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. Through its advocacy work, the Library Board seeks to promote the profile of the Library and enhance its importance to the community. This policy sets out the advocacy responsibilities of the Library Board.

1. The Board Chair (or delegate) shall be the official spokesperson for the West Perth Public Library on issues approved by the Library Board;
2. In pursuing its advocacy activities, the Library Board shall:
  - a. prepare an advocacy plan and review it annually;
  - b. inform Council of the needs of the community, the development of library services, plans and achievements by means of reports;
  - c. meet with Council at least twice a year to review progress and discuss funding needs;
  - d. participate regularly in activities that build relationships with individuals and organizations that share interests with those of the West Perth Public Library;
  - e. identify and respond to issues, concerns and government policies that may directly or indirectly affect the West Perth 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.

## Planning

The West Perth Public Library Board shall maintain an effective planning process for the Library in order to fulfill its mandate under the *Public Libraries Act*, RSO 1990, Chapter P.44 Section 20(a): “A board shall seek to provide, in co-operation with other boards, a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community’s unique needs”. This policy establishes a formal planning process.

1. The planning process ensures that:
  - a. the Library is able to respond to changing needs and trends in the community;
  - b. services available elsewhere in the community are not unnecessarily duplicated;
  - c. Library funds are responsibly expended in an accountable manner;
  - d. continuity of services is maintained regardless of personnel changes in Board or staff.
  
2. The Board shall:
  - a. develop a formal planning document that includes the mission statement and priorities in the second year of its four-year term;
  - b. develop a cycle for reviewing and assessing: client needs in the community, services of the Library in light of client needs, the Board’s mission statement goals and objectives, current Board planning documents;
  - c. report to the community on the Library’s progress in fulfilling its plan by: distribution of an annual report, presentation to Council and community organizations.
  
3. A review and assessment of the Library’s current environment may include
  - a. Community analysis: gathered at least every four years and results used in planning library service;
  - b. Consultation of users: Library patrons are consulted regularly concerning service (e.g. by surveys, suggestion box, website etc.)

## Policy Development

The West Perth Public Library establishes policies to align Library operations with the Library’s mission. The Board is the sole body within the West Perth Public Library that has authority and responsibility for establishing policy. This power is granted to the Board in the *Public Libraries Act* R.S.O. 1990 chapter P.44 section 3 (3).

This policy directs the Board to develop and monitor policies. Board members and staff are responsible for knowing, understanding and complying with policies.

## Types of Policies

1. Framework Policies: records the Board's decisions on vision, mission, values and goals;
2. Board By-Laws: establish the organizational structure of the Board and how it does business;
3. Governance Policies: define the responsibilities and regulate the work of the Board;
4. Operational Policies: regulate the services and day-to-day operations of the Library.

## Responsibilities

The Board will:

1. establish a schedule for policy review for existing policies and integrate it in the agendas for Board meetings. All policies should be reviewed within the four year term of the appointing Council;
2. ensure that policies comply with the *Public Libraries Act*, applicable municipal by-laws or provincial or federal legislation.

## Policy Approval

Policy recommendations will be reviewed at regularly scheduled meetings of the Board, introduced by a motion and approved at regularly scheduled meetings of the Board.

## Policy distribution

All policies should be documented in a standard format, numbered according to policy type and include the date of approval and date of most recent review.

The Board will:

1. include the approved policies in the policy manual;
2. ensure that all trustees and staff have access to the policy manual;
3. post policies on the Library's website.

## Considerations

Development of a new policy or revision of an existing policy can come from several sources: a member of the Board, CEO, Municipal Council, member of the public, or provincial government.

## Evaluation of the CEO

It is the Board's responsibility to appoint a qualified and competent individual as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO). The Board oversees the performance of the CEO and supports the CEO's development. As part of this process, the Board conducts a formal annual performance appraisal of the CEO. This process facilitates communication between the Board and the CEO and ensures that the Board's priorities are being achieved. Because the Board has agreed to adopt the Employee Manual of the Municipality of West Perth, this evaluation must be completed by October 31<sup>st</sup> of each year. The prescribed performance appraisal form included in the Employee Manual is used for the CEO's performance review. A copy of the completed form is forwarded to the CAO of the Municipality since it determines salary adjustment for the next year. A copy is retained in the Library's files.

1. The CEO's performance will be evaluated by the Board or committee of the Board who shall:
  - a. use the written job description used by the Municipality and the Board to satisfy the requirements of the Pay Equity legislation;
  - b. develop with the CEO annual performance objectives based on the strategic priorities of the Board;
  - c. conduct a performance review six months after the appointment of a new CEO;
  - d. conduct an annual review of the CEO's performance;
  - e. appraise the CEO's performance based on the job description, relevant competencies, progress towards achieving the Board's priorities, and compliance with Board policies;
  - f. invite the CEO to be an active participant in his/her own appraisal;
  - g. keep confidential performance review reports.
2. Information collected to assess the performance of the CEO may include:
  - a. annual report from the CEO on outcomes of the previous year's objectives and actions;
  - b. data on service performance measures such as circulation, members, program statistics, collection development etc.
3. Competencies on which the CEO is evaluation may include: general management, human resources, leadership qualities.
4. In the event that the CEO's performance needs improvement, the Board must clearly state where progress must be made and will:

- a. offer training and/or mentoring opportunities to address specific issues;
- b. re-evaluate the performance of the CEO in six months.

**Related documents:**

- *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*
  - *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990*
  - *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, R.S.O. 1990*  
chapter M56
  - Municipality of West Perth, *Employee Manual*
  - *Ontario Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990*
  - *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990*
- 

**Issued:** October 2018

**Revised:** October 2025