



Southern  
Ontario  
Library  
Service

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# *Library Board Development Kit*

**2010**

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Southern Ontario Library Service  
Library Board Development Kit

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## Introduction

*The Trustee Orientation Kit* began in 1991 as a response to the Ontario Public Library Strategic Plan called *One Place to Look*. At that time, it was part of the *Library Trustee Development Program*, which was led by Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) and supported by Ontario Library Service–North (OLS-N) and the Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA), with the assistance of the Ministry responsible for public libraries. In 2004 edition, the name was changed to *Library Board Orientation Kit* to focus attention on the board as the legal entity, rather than on the individual trustee. With this version in 2010, the name has changed again to *Library Board Development Kit*, to reflect a new focus on board development as opposed to just board orientation.

While board orientation focuses on helping board members understand the board’s work and trustees’ responsibilities, and can include introductions, team building, overview of services, review of board’s by-laws and governance policies; board development includes activities intended to raise the quality of the board’s operations to a new level. Board development might include a board evaluation, training on aspects of board work such as strategic planning or advocacy, coaching the board chair, development of board policies as well as activities to improve its operations, for example, meeting management, decision making and planning.

### How to use the sections within the *Library Board Development Kit*

The *Library Board Development Kit* is a tool to support new boards as they learn about their job and their library.

The *Kit* begins with a section on Board Orientation which includes a sample board orientation agenda and notes for presenters. This information can be tailored by libraries developing their own orientation session. Each outgoing library board, in conjunction with the CEO, will provide an orientation session for new library board members. This should be done prior to the board’s first meeting. The length of time needed for a thorough orientation varies from board to board. Most orientation sessions fall in a range of a minimum of two hours to a full-day session.

The other sections within this *Kit* are designed so that boards can complete them at each board meeting during the first year of the term. While it will often be the CEO who will encourage the board to work through the sections as a group, board chairpersons and Library directors/CEOs may lead a 20 minute discussion on the board agenda. They may also be used as handouts at one meeting, with an opportunity for comments and questions at the beginning of the next meeting.

Individual trustees may choose to complete each section independently. The advantage in reviewing the section as a group is that the activity helps to develop a working relationship among board members. Whether used independently or as a group, after the first year of the term, the *Library Board Development Kit* should continue to be used as a key resource.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Resources

### a) Ontario Library Service (OLS) and Ontario Library Association (OLA) Resources

The “**Board Development Resources**” page within the **Joint OLS-N/SOLS Clearinghouse of Professional Information** is where you should begin your research. OLS staff keep the Clearinghouse current with the latest publications as well as a wealth of important research material of interest to boards. This section includes general links and resources of interest to library boards in addition to sites that deal with a variety of board development topics. There are sub-sections on Advocacy, Board-CEO Relationship, Budgeting and Financial Control, CEO Performance Appraisal, Ethics, Duties, Responsibilities, Fundraising, Friends, Legal responsibilities, Partnerships and Strategic Alliances, Policy Writing, Recruitment, and Role of the CEO. The address is <http://www.sols.org/links/clearinghouse/boarddev/index.htm>

Over the years, the Ontario Library Service has produced an extensive list of publications to assist library trustees, including *Trustee Tips*, *Trustee 20/20*, *Library Development Guides* and various manuals and toolkits. These are available through the “Library Development” section of Southern Ontario Library Service website, by following the “Publications” link to [http://www.sols.org/publications/trustee\\_development.htm](http://www.sols.org/publications/trustee_development.htm).

The **Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA)** has developed a library board development program called *Leadership by Design*. All of the program materials are posted on the OLBA website at [www.accessola.com/olba](http://www.accessola.com/olba). The program includes an interactive tutorial as well as *Cut to the Chase*, a quick reference guide for board members; access to *One Place to Look*, an online access library for current board development resources and programs; links to the audio workshops called “Effective Board Governance” offered through the Education Institute; and information from the “Networking with our Peers” workshops originally held in Spring 2010.

### b) Further reading

- Blue Avocado (formerly Board Café) – and monthly newsletter. [www.blueavocado.org](http://www.blueavocado.org).
- Carver Policy Governance® Model. <http://www.carvergovernance.com/pubs.htm>
- *Michigan Public Library Trustee Manual*. Michigan Department of History, Arts and Libraries at [http://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal\\_Im\\_trusteemanual2004\\_107173\\_7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/hal_Im_trusteemanual2004_107173_7.pdf)
- Moore, Mary Y. *The Successful Library Trustee Handbook*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2010
- Nichols, Jerry. *Handbook for Library Trustees of New York State*, 2005
- Reed, Sally Gardner, and Jillian Kalonick. *The Complete Library Trustee Handbook*. New York: Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2010.
- Starr, Dr. Kevin. *Trustee tool kit for library leadership*. California State Library, 1998. Posted at <http://www.library.ca.gov/lids/docs/toolkit.pdf>
- *Utah Public Library trustee handbook public library board basics*. Posted at <http://library.utah.gov/documents/TrusteeManual2009.pdf>
- Webjunction online community for libraries. <http://www.webjunction.org/trustees>

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Overview of the Kit

<b>1. Board Orientation</b>
Orientation Sample Board Orientation Policy Basic Guidelines for Library Board Orientation Sample Agenda for Board Orientation Session
<b>2. Public libraries in Ontario</b>
What do public libraries do? Libraries and legislation Quick Reference to the <b>Public Libraries Act</b> Types of public libraries Funding of public libraries Public libraries and the provincial structure Overview of public library organizations in Ontario Principles and purpose of library service <b>Discussion:</b> Learning about your own library
<b>3. Legal Responsibilities</b>
Director's liability Standard of care Conflict of interest Potential legislative liability Defensive practices to protect the Board Indemnification and insurance Implications of the <b>Municipal Act</b> on public libraries <b>Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries</b> <b>Discussion: Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries</b>
<b>4. The role of the board</b>
Governance Work of the board Area 1 - Define the purpose and direction of the library Plan Set Policy Area 2 - Clearly delegate authority Hire a qualified CEO Evaluate the CEO annually Area 3 - Advocate for library Service Accountability of the board <b>Discussion:</b> The role of the board

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## 5. Meeting Management

Board meetings  
Agendas – Monthly, Annual and Consent agendas  
Officers – Chair & Vice-chair, Secretary & Treasurer & Chief Executive Officer  
Committees  
Chairing meetings  
Meetings - Rules of order  
Closed sessions and confidentiality  
    A note about the Board acts only as a unit  
Code of conduct  
Minutes  
Preparation for meetings  
**Discussion:** Checklist to evaluate your meetings

## 6. Financial control

Financial Role of the Library  
    Board treasurer  
Financial accountability to council  
    Real Property and Debentures  
Budget process and the library board  
    Budget estimates to council  
Financial monitoring  
    a) Monthly financial reports for the board  
        • What should the monthly financial report look like?  
        • Knowing what questions to ask  
    b) Annual audit  
Financial policies  
    • Procurement policies required in 2005  
**Discussion:** How does the budget process operate in your library?

## 7. Key Relationships – The board, the CEO and municipal council

The board and the CEO  
    Key responsibility areas  
    CEO's key responsibility areas  
Overview of roles and responsibilities for board and CEO  
The board and municipal council  
Advocacy is critical to working with council  
    Lobbying  
    When Should Trustees Advocate?  
Group dynamics and board communication  
    Some key communication skills  
**Discussion:** Building a relationship with municipal council

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<b>8. Planning</b>
What is planning? The Planning Process The board's role in the planning process The Importance of strategic thinking Selected planning tools <i>Creating the Future You've Imagined: A Guide to Essential Planning</i> . Library Development Guide # 3 <i>Ontario Public Library Guidelines</i> <i>The Library's Contribution to Your Community</i> : A resource manual for libraries to document their social and economic contribution ... <b>Discussion</b> questions: Planning
<b>9. Policy</b>
The board's role in developing policy The staff role in developing policy Written vs. unwritten policy The policy manual Sample Policy: Governance – Policy Development Three steps to developing policy Decision-making: A key skill in developing policy Speaking with one voice Eliciting input on your policy Review policies regularly and revise them as necessary Types of policies <b>Discussion</b> : Policy checklist
<b>10. The library board and the community</b>
Why should boards focus on the relationship with the community? Community Development What is community development? Activities demonstrating that the Board is geared to community development Learn about your community Assess community assets and resources, needs and issues Making it work The board and the broader library community <b>Discussion</b> : Matrix of board-community connections
<b>Acronyms</b>

## Board Orientation

Board orientation is an essential part of library board development. Typically, it is the inaugural meeting given to board members to review and discuss roles and responsibilities. Board orientation is about the unique aspects of the library as an organization rather than training on specific aspects of governance such as strategic planning or policy development. Board orientations are useful for giving an introduction to governance, and to the governing legislation, *Public Libraries Act*. The orientation session also provides all board members with a common frame of reference for how the board and library operate.

Developed through a collaboration of libraries, agencies and funders, the *Ontario Public Library Guidelines* are an important tool that libraries can use to implement the best practices for governing and managing library services. A library must demonstrate that they meet each guideline in order to be accredited. The *Guidelines* include two requirements related to board orientation:

### 1.6 Board member Orientation and Information

*Formal orientation of new library board members to library services, policies and current issues will help them to participate fully and effectively in the work of the board. On-going provision of information is necessary to keep board members up-to-date and to maintain their effectiveness.*

**1.6.1 Duties and responsibilities** - Board members are provided with written guidelines outlining their duties and responsibilities.

**1.6.2 Orientation** - The board ensures that a formal orientation program is carried out for all new board members, including, for example: a tour of the library facility; an introduction to library staff; an introduction to other board members; a review of the library's planning documents, budget and recent board minutes; a review of duties and responsibilities as required by current public library and other legislation. In addition, all board members are provided with a package of background materials, including, for example: current public library legislation; the library's current planning document; the library's most recent audited financial statement; the library's current budget; the library's most recent financial report; the most recent provincial *trustee materials*.

These guidelines are helpful in that they list the information that should be given to board members at the beginning of each new term.

Any important activity of the board should be set out in policy and so a library should have a policy on board orientation. When a board develops a policy it expresses, in writing, the purpose and value of orientation and defines what is to be done with respect to orientation.



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The following is a sample board orientation policy from the **Trillium Public Library Sample Policies** published by Southern Ontario Library Service and available on the SOLS' website at <http://www.sols.org/publications/guides/trillumpolicies/tofc.htm> This sample board orientation policy has been updated to include the new name for the former **Library Board Orientation Kit**.

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## Trillium Public Library

Policy Type: **Governance**

Policy Number: **GOV-02**

Policy Title: **Board Orientation**

Policy Approval Date:



Policy Review Date:

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The orientation of new members is necessary in order for there to be a common and shared understanding of the authority and role of the library board. This policy sets out the requirements for board orientation.

1. Board members shall be given a thorough orientation within two months of their appointment to the board.
2. The Chief Executive Officer (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 bylaws and governance policies
  - d) a discussion on the role, structure, code of conduct and function of the board
  - e) a tour of the library and an introduction to staff members and services
3. Each board member will receive:
  - a) the current **Trillium Public Library Policy Manual**
  - b) the library's current planning document
  - c) a copy and overview of the annual operating plan and the current budget
  - d) an application for library membership
  - e) a copy of the **Library Board Development Kit** (Southern Ontario Library Service)
  - f) a copy of **Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance**. (Ontario Library Boards' Association)

### Related Documents:

Trillium Public Library. **Gov 10 - Board Training**

Southern Ontario Library Service. **Library Board Development**. (2010)

Ontario Library Boards' Association. **Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance**. (2007)

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## Basic Guidelines for Library Board Orientation

Board orientation provides information needed by board members in order to effectively carry out their roles as members of the library's board of directors. Topics to be included in the orientation reinforce the library's purpose and mission, provide an overview of how the board operates and introduces core areas of service.

The following guidelines may prove useful to CEOs and boards as they develop their own approach to board orientation.

### Regarding Timing of the Session

Conduct board orientation – for all board members - shortly after new members are appointed to the board. This scheduling helps new members quickly gain an understanding of the **Public Libraries Act**, their roles, and expected contributions to the library. This information often improves their comfort and participation as board members. Conducting the orientation for all board members, including returning board members and members of council appointed to board, establishes a practice of a shared commitment to the success of the board. Returning board members will benefit from hearing the questions of new members and from contributing to the discussion of these questions. This session is the launch of the new board.

### Who Should Be Involved in Planning the Session

Design of the board orientation should include at least the Chief Executive Officer, who is most knowledgeable about the library, and the board Chair. The CEO manages the logistics of the meeting.

### Members' Preparation for Training

Provide the board orientation agenda and materials to members at least two weeks before the meeting. Ask them to review the materials before the meeting.

### Selecting Topics and Materials for Board Orientation

The **Ontario Public Library Guidelines** provides a comprehensive list of information that should be part of every board orientation. Carefully consider the time it will take to present this information and set out a plan on how best to deliver it. At the very least, schedule a board orientation session outside of the regular board meeting to provide a block of time that can be used to focus on certain topics. Consider which elements are best presented at an orientation meeting and which can be included in the regular board agenda? Planning in advance will ensure that you allocate time at special meetings or regular board meetings to cover it all.

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## Basic Guidelines for Library Board Orientation (continued)

### Selecting Topics and Materials for Board Orientation (continued)

Materials to be provided to participants include copies of the following:

- a. **Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44**
- b. by-laws and governance policies such as those found in the [Trillium Public Library: Sample Policies](#) (Library Development Guide #4):
  - i. Powers and Duties of the Board
  - ii. Purpose of the Board
  - iii. Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board members
  - iv. Intellectual Freedom
  - v. Delegation of Authority to the CEO
- c. written guidelines outlining board duties and responsibilities if not in policy
- d. the library's planning document
- e. **Library Board Development Kit** (Southern Ontario Library Service, 2010)

### **Sample Agenda for Board Orientation Session**

The purpose of the library board orientation is to provide board members with basic information about the legislative framework for public libraries, the role of the board and CEO, the operations of the board and core library services. It should be designed to establish the foundation for being successful as a board member.

This sample agenda is one option for topics that could be covered in a two or three hour board orientation session. The focus of this sample agenda is on the context for public library governance. There is less of a focus on library services, in which case the information on services would need to be expanded on at another session or at the regular board meetings.

#### **Board Orientation - Sample Agenda**

Item 1 - Welcome and Introductions

Item 2 - Review of Purpose of the Orientation

Item 3 - The Public Libraries Act

Item 4 - Role of the Board

Item 5 - The Board and the CEO – Shared leadership

Item 6 - Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members

Item 7 - Introduction to Library Services – Mission and Goals

Item 8 - Library Board Development – Next Steps

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## Sample Agenda for Board Orientation Session (continued)

### Presenter's notes for the Sample Board Orientation

#### Item 1 - Welcome and Introductions

Presenters need to introduce themselves. Some participants may be new to the library, and introductions are necessary at this point. As participants will be working in pairs at various points in the orientation session, each participant should provide some information on why they are interested in library governance and leadership.

#### Item 2 - Review of the Purpose of the Orientation Session

Information on the purpose of the session should be provided. In addition to getting to know each other, participants should be told that they will be provided with information about:

- the legislative framework for public libraries
- the role of the board and CEO
- the operations of the board
- core library services

At this point, participants can be asked if they have any further expectations from the orientation session. If so, note these in the “parking lot” to review at the end of the meeting.

The use of a “parking lot” is one method for sticking to the agenda of any meeting can help to capture additional issues and ideas generated throughout the session. Items are noted on a flip chart. Each issue is then addressed at the appropriate time of the session and the list reviewed again at the end of the workshop for the purpose of either: addressing outstanding items; or seeking further information; or suggesting that trustees work on outstanding issues and the items be placed on the board agenda.

#### Item 3 - The Public Libraries Act

Under this item on the agenda, the participants will be given a thorough review of the ***Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44*** (from this point, referred to as the ***Public Libraries Act*** or simply, the ***Act***).

The ***Public Libraries Act*** is provincial legislation that governs the operations of public libraries in Ontario. It is important for board members to be aware of the areas of the ***Act*** that prescribe the operations of the board, the powers of the board, and the legislated requirements for the provision of library services. The ***Act*** includes specific directions for the first meeting of the library board.

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## Sample Agenda for Board Orientation Session (continued)

### Presenter's notes for the Sample Board Orientation

#### Item 3 - The Public Libraries Act (continued)

Although the actual legislation only runs to about 20 pages, there are two documents which help people to wade through the legislation:

- Quick Reference to the **Public Libraries Act, R.S.O 1990, chapter P.44**
- [Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries](#)

The **Library Board Development Kit** includes copies of these documents, with the "Quick Reference" document in Section 2 and the "**Questions and Answers for Public Libraries**" document in Section 3. In addition, an electronic version of the **Questions and Answers for Public Libraries** can be found in the Libraries section of the Ministry of Tourism and Culture's website. At this point in the orientation, it would be valuable to review these two documents.

In doing the review, the specific directions for the first meeting of the library board should be highlighted:

- The first meeting of a board in a new term shall be called by the chief executive officer if authorized by by-law of the municipal council or if no by-law has been passed by the clerk of the appointing council (Section 14(1))
- A board shall elect one of its members as chair at its first meeting in a new term (Section 14(3))

*Main points covered by this item on the orientation session agenda*

- *Board members must be familiar with the content of the **Public Libraries Act** and govern and provide services in a manner that complies with the **Act**.*

#### Item 4 - Role of the Board

The **Public Libraries Act** directs the library board to provide a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the needs of the community.

Ask participants to share their ideas on what the work of a governing board must be in order to be successfully in achieving this outcome. Then using the information provided in Section 4 of **Library Board Development Kit**, referring to the Role of the Board, key points with respect to the role of the Library Board can be highlighted. In particular, review the library board's policy on the role of the board, assuming that such a policy exists.

*Main points covered by this item on the orientation session agenda*

- *The board is the legal authority for the library and is responsible for the organization's highest level of decision-making*
- *The board is accountable for establishing the library's vision and mission and setting the rate of progress in achieving these*
- *The board carries out its governance function by developing and monitoring policy and delegating authority to the CEO*

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## Sample Agenda for Board Orientation Session (continued)

### Presenter's notes for the Sample Board Orientation

#### Item 5 - The Board and the CEO – Shared Leadership

The work of the board and the work of the CEO are quite specific and require different skills and different information. The board exists to direct the vision and mission of the library and ensure that the community's needs have been met but has no direct responsibility for operations. The board is focused on what the library should accomplish and the CEO focuses on how it is done.

When there is uncertainty about what is a board issue and what is an operational issue the board should ask itself – Does the discussion, action or decision we are engaged in relate to our role in defining the library's direction and monitoring progress, delegating authority to the CEO through plans, budgets, policies or library advocacy?

To illustrate how the Board and CEO should work together as a shared leadership, review the information provided in the OLBA publication called ***Cut to the Chase: Ontario public library governance at-a-glance***. In particular, look at the section called "The Public Library Board and the Chief Executive Officer: Who Does What?". In addition, it would be helpful to review the library board's policy on delegation of authority to the CEO, if one exists.

*Main points covered by this item on the orientation session agenda*

- *The board directs the work of the CEO through: decisions made at board meetings, policies, official plans, and the budget*
- *The CEO manages the day-to-day operations of the library and serves as a professional advisor to the board.*

#### Item 6 - Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members

Public libraries are given corporate status in the ***Public Libraries Act***. Therefore the ***Corporations Act*** applies in determining the duties and liabilities of members of public library boards. Each member of the library board has responsibilities by virtue of being a director of a corporation. They owe what is called a "fiduciary duty" to the corporation. The duty is a "fiduciary" duty because there is an obligation to act in the best interests of the corporation, and an obligation of loyalty, honesty and good faith.

Individuals on a board do not act alone or on behalf of the board unless specifically given the authority by the board as a whole.

At this point in the orientation, refer to Section 3 of the ***Library Board Development Kit***, which is called, "Legal Responsibilities". In addition, once again, it is useful to review local documents. The Library Board's code of conduct or policy on duties and responsibilities of individual board members should be reviewed.

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## Sample Agenda for Board Orientation Session (continued)

### Presenter's notes for the Sample Board Orientation

#### Item 6 - Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members (continued)

*Main points covered by this item on the orientation session agenda*

- *The duties of municipal councilors on the board are the same as those of other board members*
- *Board members prepare for all board meetings and use meeting productively*
- *Board members offer opinions on issues that are subject to board discussion and show respect for the opinions of others*
- *Board members assume no authority to make decisions outside of board meetings*

#### Item 7 - Introduction to Library Services

The board's role has been described as one of setting direction and ensuring progress while the CEO makes program decisions and ensures that programs achieve desired outcomes for the community. While the board should not get involved in day-to-day program decision making it must know if the library is successful. To do this the Library Board needs to have an understanding of the library's services and programs.

There are several activities which could be undertaken to cover this item on the agenda:

- Review the library's current vision and mission statements.
- Describe the library's service and program priorities.
- Describe the way in which the library's official planning documents, such as the budget, support the mission and service priorities.

*Main points covered by this item on the orientation session agenda*

- *Services and programs are the vehicles for achieving the library's mission*
- *Priorities for programs and services are identified in the board's plans and budget.*

#### Item 8 - Library Board Development – Next Steps

Library board development is about raising the quality of the board's operations. The board orientation begins the process of library board development. The process continues with ongoing training.

At this point in the session, any items that remain in the "Parking Lot" should be reviewed, and plans made for follow-up actions. At the end of this session, there should be a timetable and plan for further board orientation and development, either as a proposal or actual plan. If there is an actual plan developed, then there should be agreement on the time and content of the next board development session. The presenter should thank everyone for their contribution to the session.

*Main point covered by this item on the orientation session agenda*

- *The board needs to plan for ongoing development*

## Public Libraries in Ontario

### What do public libraries do?

Today's public library is a community service that benefits everyone. It changes lives and strengthens communities in important ways. Increasingly, the public library is recognized as a vibrant community hub where residents study, research, attend events and simply enjoy gathering and connecting with one another.

#### **In terms of services, today's public libraries provide a wide range of services such as:**

- Lending of materials and resources such as books, video and audio recordings.
- Information services to provide information to meet individual and corporate needs.
- Collections of newspapers and periodicals, either in print or digital formats
- 24/7 On-line access to electronic databases and collections of audio books and e-books
- Local history collections and special collections in areas of local interest.
- Interlibrary loan service helping users locate and borrow materials from other libraries.
- Programs for all ages including regular story hours for young children, summer reading programs for young people, and author visits.
- Access to the Internet

#### **In addition, many libraries provide such services as:**

- Home delivery services for shut-ins or seniors.
- Audio books for people who cannot use print material.
- Meeting rooms for local community groups
- Art and craft displays
- Literacy programs
- Community websites
- Computer and Internet training programs

Library staff are trained to assist users in using and getting maximum benefit from the library's services. It is then the library board, made up of citizens of the community, which builds the structure which allows the public libraries to operate, using the provincial library legislation as a the guide.



## Libraries and Legislation

Lending libraries were introduced to Canada in the form of subscription libraries in the early 1800s. A Scottish tradition, subscription libraries required members to pay an annual fee. Mechanics' Institutes began to replace subscription libraries in the 1830's. They had a broader mandate, existing to provide 'mechanics and working men' with lectures, classes, reading rooms and lending libraries to improve literacy skills in the working class.

The first library legislation in Ontario dealt with both of these institutions and was passed in 1851, followed in 1882 by the ***Free Libraries Act***. It permitted the establishment of free public library services supported by a municipal levy and governed by a board of citizens appointed by local council.

Since then, the Ontario government has maintained its strong interest in providing public libraries to communities across the province. Although considered a local service, public libraries are established and guided by legislation at the provincial level. The official name of the legislation for public libraries is ***Public Libraries Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, chapter P44***. A copy of this provincial legislation can be obtained through the E-laws/legislation section of the Ontario government website at [www.ontario.ca](http://www.ontario.ca) or directly at <http://www.e-laws.gov.on.ca/navigation?file=home&lang=en>. The province also supports the public libraries through a number of funding programs that will be discussed later in this ***Kit***.

**The *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44* specifies three major responsibilities for public library boards:**

### **1. Accountability to municipal council**

The board must submit budget estimates and an audited financial statement to council each year (Section 24 (1), (2) and (7)). The board must seek council approval to acquire and dispose of real property and to raise funds through debentures (Section 19 and Section 25).

### **2. Reporting responsibilities to the province**

The board is required to report specific statistics to the provincial minister annually. The board is also required to report on specific grants as outlined in the terms of reference of the grants (Section 20 (f)).

### **3. Provision of free public library service reflecting the needs of the community**

Section 20(a) of the ***Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44*** directs a public library board to provide “comprehensive and efficient public library service” reflecting the community’s needs. The Act goes on to direct the board regarding fees for library service.

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A summary of requirements in the **Act** is provided here:

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## Quick reference to the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44*

The legislation prescribes the manner in which the board operates in the following areas. All references are to the specific section of the Act, for example -Section 3(3).

### General

- Public Library Boards are established by municipal by-law (Section 3 (1)) and are corporations (Section 3 (3)).
- Library Boards must be under the control of a board, which is a corporation - Section 3 (3), Section 5 (3) and Section 7(7).

### Appointments

- Council shall appoint at least five members to the board - Section 9(1)
- Council shall not appoint more of its own members to a board than: in the case of a public library board or union board, 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.- Section 10 (2).
- Board or municipal employees may not be board members - Section 10 (1d).
- A board member holds office for a term concurrent with the term of the appointing council, or until a successor is appointed, and may be reappointed for one or more further terms - Section 10 (3).
- A person is qualified to be appointed as a member of a board who is a member of the appointing council or,
  - (a) is at least eighteen years old;
  - (b) is a Canadian citizen;
  - (c) is,
    - (i) a resident of the municipality for which the board is established in the case of a public library board, a resident of one of the municipalities for which the board is established in the case of a union board, a resident of one of the participating municipalities in the case of a county library board, or a resident of the area served by the board in the case of a county library co-operative board,
    - (ii) a resident of a municipality that has a contract with the board
    - (iii) a resident of the board area of a local service board that has a contract with the board,
    - (iv) a member of an Indian band that has a contract with the board, or
    - (v) a member of a second board that has entered into a contract with the board to purchase from it library services for the residents of the second board; and
  - (d) is not employed by the board or by the municipality or county or, in the case of a union board, by any of the affected municipalities - Section 10 (1).

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Quick reference to the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44* (continued)

### Disqualification

- A board member is disqualified if he or she,
  - is convicted of an indictable offence;
  - becomes incapacitated;
  - is absent from the meetings of the board for three consecutive months without being authorized by a board resolution;
  - ceases to be qualified for membership under section 10, or
  - otherwise forfeits his or her seat. - Section 13.

### Officers of the Board

- A board elects one of its members as chair at its first meeting in a new term. In the absence of the chair, the board may appoint one of its members as acting chair - Section 14 (3).

### Staff

- A board may appoint and remove such employees as it considers necessary, determine the terms of their employment, fix their remuneration and prescribe their duties - Section 15(1).

### Chief executive officer

- A board appoints a chief executive officer who shall have general supervision over and direction of the operations of the public library and its staff, shall attend all board meetings and shall have the other powers and duties that the board assigns to him or her from time to time - Section 15(2).
- The board appoints a secretary and treasurer - Section 15(3)(4).
- The same person may be the secretary and treasurer and chief executive officer.

### Meetings

- All members of the board including the chair may vote on all matters and a tie is considered negative
- A board shall hold regular meetings once a month for at least 10 months each year and at such other times as it considers necessary.
- The chair or any two members of a board may summon a special meeting of the board by giving each member reasonable notice in writing, specifying the purpose for which the meeting is called.
- Quorum - The presence of a majority of the board is necessary for the transaction of business at a meeting.
- All meetings shall be open to the public – Section 16.1(2). The **Act** provides specific directions on exceptions in various descriptions in Section 16.1.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Quick reference to the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44* (continued)

### Services

- A board provides a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community's unique need and may operate special services in connection with a library as it considers necessary Section 20
- A board cannot charge for
  - admission to a public library or for use in the library of the library's materials (Section 23)
  - reserve and borrow circulating materials that are prescribed or belong to a prescribed class (See Regulation 976 )and
  - use of reference and information services as the board considers practicable
- Fees **may** be charged for:
  - other services not referred to above
  - use of the parts of a building
  - use of library services by persons who do not reside in the area of the board's jurisdiction.

### Rules/Policies

- A board **may** make rules,
  - for the use of library services
  - for the admission of the public to the library
  - for the exclusion from the library of persons who behave in a disruptive manner or cause damage to library property
  - imposing fines for breaches of the rules
  - suspending library privileges for breaches of the rules; and
  - regulating all other matters connected with the management of the library and library property. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 23 (4).

Note: This guide has no legislative sanction. Comments are for the convenience of reference only. For accuracy refer to the official volume.

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# Library Board Development Kit

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## Types of public libraries

Four types of library boards are identified in the ***Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44***:

- Public Library Boards
- Union Boards
- County Library Boards
- County Library Co-operative Boards

**Municipal Public Library** - The ***Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44*** grants a single municipality the power to establish, by by-law, a public library which shall be under the management and control of a board which is known as a corporation. This corporation is known as The (*insert name of municipality*) Public Library Board, for example, The Brockville Public Library Board. A municipal public library is under the management and control of a board of no fewer than five members, which are appointed by the municipal council. The council cannot appoint more of its own members to the board than members of the public.

**Union Public Library** - A union public library is established by the councils of two or more municipalities making an agreement. The agreement specifies what proportion of the cost of the establishment, operation and maintenance of the union public library will be paid by each municipality. The union public library is under the management and control of a union board. The board is comprised of no fewer than 5 members appointed by the councils of the affected municipalities and in the proportions and manner specified in the agreement. The councils cannot appoint more of their own members to the board than members of the public.

**County Library** - A county library is established where a resolution of the councils of at least two-thirds of the municipalities forming part of the county requests that the county establish a county library. The county council passes a by-law to establish a county library. The county library shall be under the management and control of a board. A county library board is composed of at least five members appointed by county council. The county council can appoint a bare majority of its own members to the board with a minority of members from the public. A county library is a corporation known in English as The (*insert name of county*) County Library Board, for example, The Essex County Library Board.

A **county library co-operative** can no longer be established under the ***Public Library Act***. Simcoe County Library Co-operative is the only co-operative in Ontario.

### A note about First Nations libraries

To date, almost 40% of First Nation communities have public libraries. First Nation libraries are eligible for a 'per capita operating grant' and have access to the Ministry's First Nations Public Library Development Program. The ***Public Libraries Act*** is permissive, rather than prescriptive, with respect to First Nation libraries. The ***Public Libraries Act***, for First Nation libraries, is a 'best practice' resource.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Funding of public libraries

Municipal governments are the primary source of operating funds for the majority of public libraries in Ontario. In 2007, libraries reported 'total operating revenue' of \$558,998,106. Of this total, the municipal share of public library revenue in Ontario was \$483,333,151 or 87% of the total.

Another important source of operating funds is the Ontario Government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Culture, which funds all legally constituted public library boards on an annual basis. In 1998, provincial base funding for public libraries was \$4.08 per household (urban rate), \$4.80 per household (smaller rural rate) and \$1.50 per capita (First Nations). The amount that a library received is based on statistics provided by the Ministry of Municipal Affairs for the number of households at that time. Since then, the provincial base funding has been 'flat-lined'. In order to receive the grant, public libraries in the province are required to complete an annual survey for their library and an Application for Public Library Operating and Pay Equity Grants, as well as provide specific financial details to the Ministry responsible for public libraries.

Contracts for service and user fees from neighbouring municipalities without their own library provide another source of funding for some public libraries.

Sources of revenue for special projects include: project grants from the provincial government, Ontario Trillium Foundation, special funding from municipal governments, funds generated internally by public libraries through rental charges for meeting rooms and equipment, local fund-raising, donations and bequests.

The charging of fees to persons residing in the area of a board's jurisdiction for basic library services is prohibited by the ***Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c.P.44, Section 23(2)***.

## Public Libraries and the Provincial Structure

### The Municipal role

Public library service is a municipal service. The cornerstone of the Ontario public library system is the local public library. Each local public library is controlled and administered by a local public library board appointed by the local municipal or county council.

### The Provincial role

Provincial responsibility for public library service rests with the Culture Division of the Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture. The Minister and his or her staff are responsible for the administration of the ***Public Libraries Act*** and develop provincial policies for the public library system. The provides direct support of local public library service through an annual, per household grant to the local library and administers a variety of special purpose grants available to local public libraries. The Ministry maintains statistics on public libraries in Ontario. These statistics are compiled using data from the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries and the Provincial Structure (continued)

### The Ontario Library Service

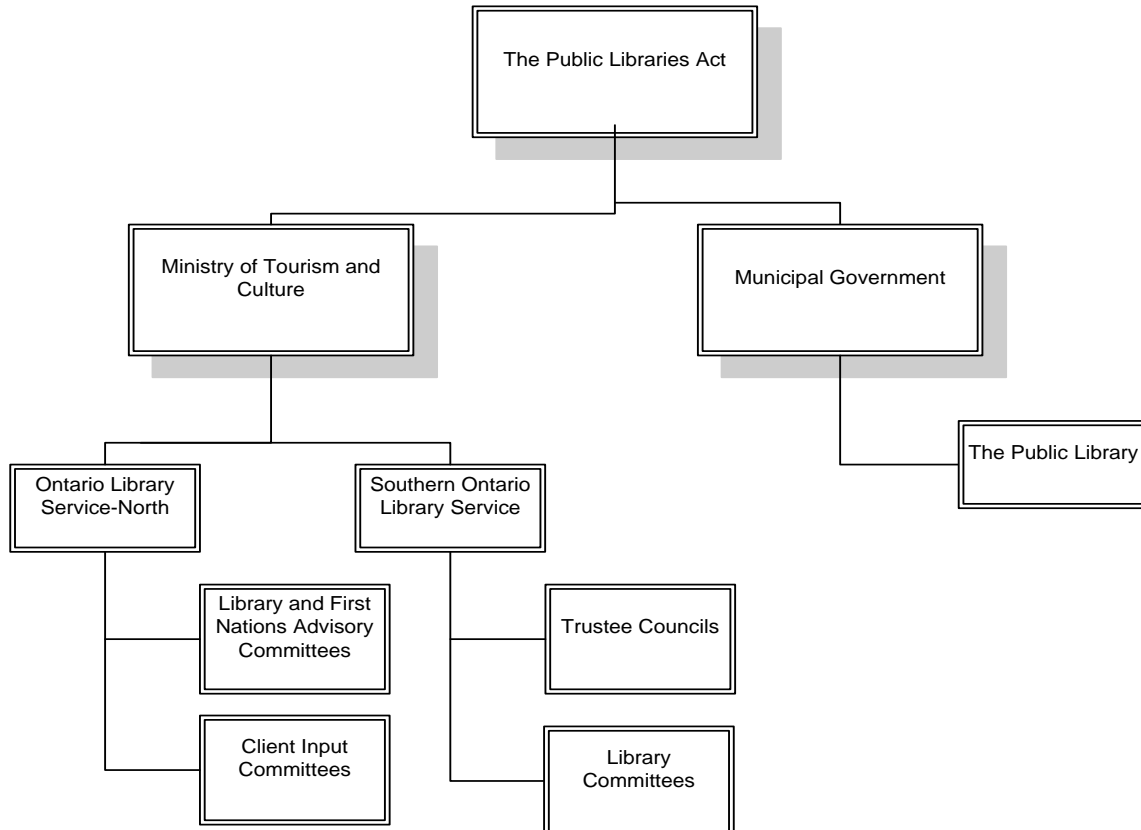
In addition to direct support to public libraries, the provincial government also funds two public library support agencies:

The **Southern Ontario Library Services (SOLS)** delivers programs and services to Southern Ontario, excluding Metropolitan Toronto, by increasing co-operation and co-ordination among public library boards and information providers, and also provides consulting, training and development services.

The **Ontario Library Service North (OLS-N)** delivers programs and services to Northern Ontario by increasing co-operation and co-ordination among public library boards and information providers, and also offers consulting, training and development services

**OLS-North** has the added responsibility "to develop equitable and maximum access to library services and resources for the residents of northern Ontario"

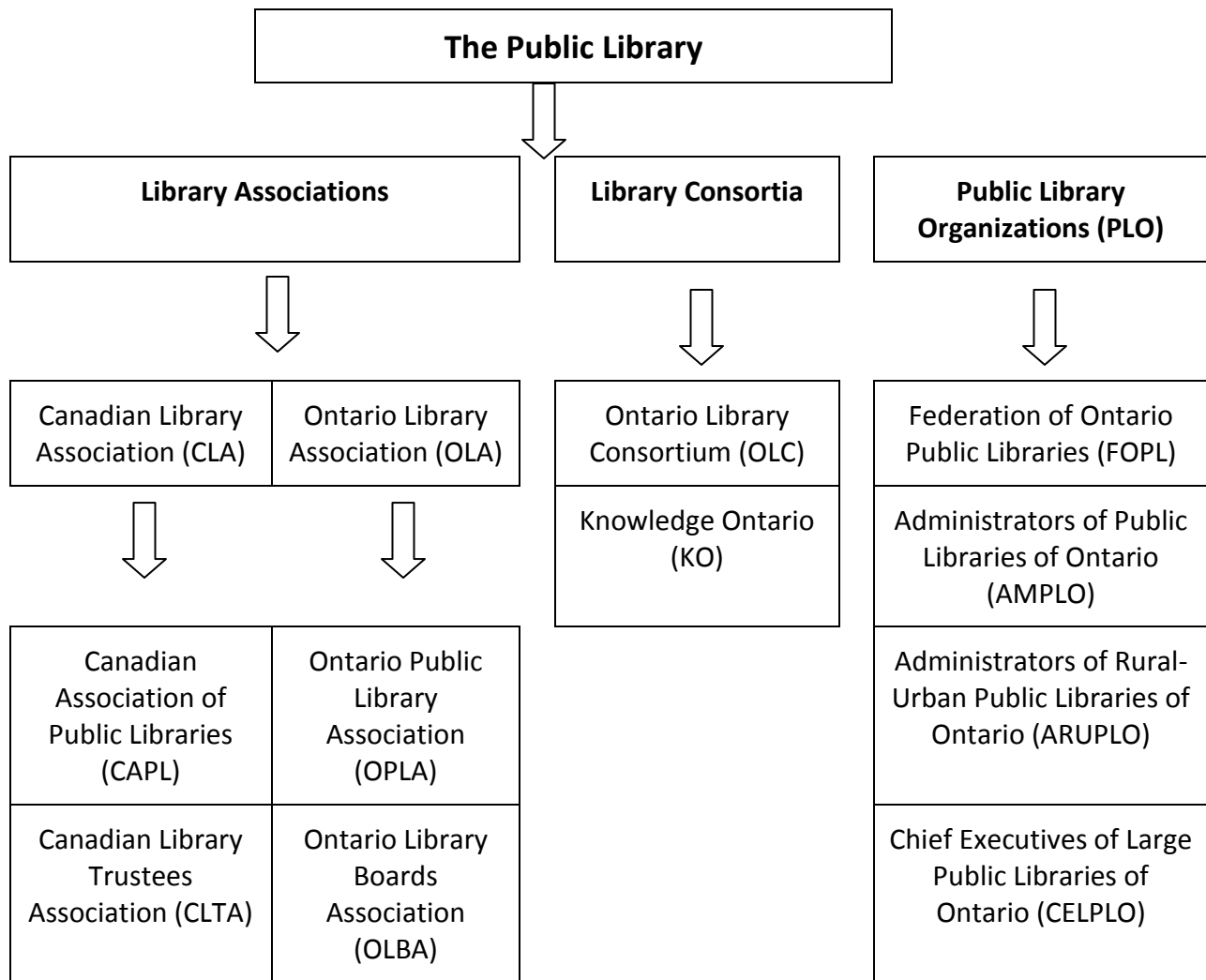
### Provincial Structure of Public Libraries in Ontario



# Library Board Development Kit

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## The Ontario library community: Public Organizations





## Library Board Development Kit

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### Overview of public library organizations in Ontario

Name of organization	Primary roles	Membership
Ontario Ministry of Tourism and Culture  <a href="http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/library/index.html">http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/library/index.html</a>	The Ministry of Tourism and Culture has responsibility for the administration of the <i>Public Libraries Act</i> . The ministry's Programs and Services Branch develops provincial policies for the public library system.	Not applicable.
Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS)  <a href="http://www.sols.org">www.sols.org</a>	The Ontario Library Service - North, and the Southern Ontario Library Service deliver programs on behalf of the ministry. SOLS and OLS-N provide services to expand local library collections and realize economies of scale (interlibrary loan, consortia purchasing, pooled collections), train staff and trustees and provide information and expertise for local library issues.	Ontario is divided geographically and all public libraries, except the City of Toronto, are served by either SOLS or OLS-N.
Ontario Library Service–North (OLS-N)  <a href="http://www.olsn.ca">www.olsn.ca</a>		
Chief Executives of Large Public Libraries of Ontario (CELPLO)	These organizations are all primarily networking groups. They will also take on projects of interest to their membership such as CELPLO's study of shared-use library facilities or ARUPLO's annual training event for branch staff.	Open to CEOs of public libraries serving a population of 100,000 or more.
Administrators of Medium-Size Public Libraries of Ontario (AMPLO)		Open to CEOs of public libraries serving between 15,000 and 100,000 population.
Administrators of Rural-Urban Public Libraries of Ontario (ARUPLO)		Open to CEOs of county libraries and lower tier public library systems with a mix of rural and urban branches. Members of other PLOs, depending on size, may also be members of ARUPLO.
Federation of Ontario Public Libraries  <a href="http://www.fopl.ca/home/">http://www.fopl.ca/home/</a>	The Federation's strategic focus includes advocacy, research and development, marketing, and consortia purchasing	Inclusive e.g., Library organizations including Ontario Library Boards, Ontario Library Service, First Nations, French Services Committee, Northern Libraries, etc.

## Library Board Development Kit

### Overview of public library organizations in Ontario (continued)

<p>Ontario Library Association</p> <p><a href="http://www.accessola.com">www.accessola.com</a></p>	<p>OLA provides an opportunity for people to associate, to meet, to share experience and expertise, to create innovative solutions in a constantly changing environment. It provides networking opportunities, education, coordination of mutual interests and needs, lobbying and political action, and related information, services and products.</p>	<p>Membership is open to any individual interested in libraries except OLBA which is open only to library boards.</p> <p>Members typically associate themselves with one of the divisions in OLA:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ontario Public Library Association (OPLA)</li> <li>• Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA)</li> <li>• Ontario College and University Library Association (OCULA)</li> <li>• Ontario Library and Information Technology Association (OLITA)</li> <li>• Ontario School Library Association (OSLA)</li> <li>• L'Association des Bibliothécaires Francophones de l'Ontario (ABFO)</li> </ul>
<p>Canadian Library Association</p> <p><a href="http://www.cla.ca">www.cla.ca</a></p>	<p>CLA/ACB is an advocate and public voice, educator and network, building the Canadian library and information community and advancing its information professionals.</p> <p>The goals of <b>Canadian Library Trustees Association (CLTA)</b> are: to promote and support cooperation and communication; to encourage public library trustees to participate in association activities and address national issues; to represent the interests of public library trustees to government and the public; and to develop training and education programs and provide forums for discussion and exchange of ideas for public library trustees.</p>	<p>The <b>Canadian Association of Public Libraries (CAPL)</b> represents members of its division on matters of concern to public libraries at a national level. This division includes the Canadian Association of Children's Libraries section.</p> <p>CLTA has members from among library trustees.</p>

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Overview of public library organizations in Ontario (continued)

<p>Knowledge Ontario</p> <p><a href="http://www.knowledgeontario.ca/">http://www.knowledgeontario.ca/</a></p>	<p>Knowledge Ontario is a province-wide collaboration of libraries (public, school, college and university), archives, museums, heritage organizations, educational institutions, and community groups to create an integrated, and interactive digital environment about, and for, Ontarians.</p>	<p>Public, school, college and university libraries</p>
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### Principles and Purpose of Library Service

Library service is founded on the principle of Intellectual Freedom. Both the Ontario Library Association and the Canadian Library Association have statements on the role of the library in protecting rights of individuals to read and access information. Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom. Libraries act on this responsibility by endorsing the principles in their policies and resisting any attempt to restrict access to information and to ensure that the selection of materials is not influenced by personal opinions of the board or staff.

#### **Canadian Library Association / Association canadienne des bibliothèques Position Statement on Intellectual Freedom**

*Approved by Executive Council ~ June 27, 1974; Amended November 17, 1983; and November 18, 1985*

All persons in Canada have the fundamental right, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Libraries have a basic responsibility for the development and maintenance of intellectual freedom.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee and facilitate access to all expressions of knowledge and intellectual activity, including those which some elements of society may consider to be unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable. To this end, libraries shall acquire and make available the widest variety of materials.

It is the responsibility of libraries to guarantee the right of free expression by making available all the library's public facilities and services to all individuals and groups who need them.

Libraries should resist all efforts to limit the exercise of these responsibilities while recognizing the right of criticism by individuals and groups.

Both employees and employers in libraries have a duty, in addition to their institutional responsibilities, to uphold these principles.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Principles and Purpose of Library Service (continued)

Public libraries in Ontario are part of a world-wide community of libraries that share common belief in the purpose of libraries and in the principles by which they should provide those services. These are expressed in the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto.

### UNESCO Public Library Manifesto

#### A gateway to knowledge

**Freedom, Prosperity and the Development** of society and individuals are fundamental human values. They will only be attained through the ability of well-informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society. Constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information.

The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups.

This Manifesto proclaims UNESCO's belief in the public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women.

UNESCO therefore encourages national and local governments to support and actively engage in the development of public libraries.

#### The Public Library

**The Public Library** is the local centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users.

The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those who cannot, for whatever reason, use the regular services and materials, for example linguistic minorities, people with disabilities or people in hospital or prison.

All age groups must find material relevant to their needs. Collections and services have to include all types of appropriate media and modern technologies as well as traditional materials. High quality and relevance to local needs and conditions are fundamental. Material must reflect current trends and the evolution of society, as well as the memory of human endeavour and imagination.

Collections and services should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor commercial pressure.

# Library Board Development Kit

## UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (continued)

### Missions of the Public Library

The following key missions which relate to information, literacy, education and culture should be at the core of public library services:

1. creating and strengthening reading habits in children at an early age;
2. supporting both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels;
3. providing opportunities for personal creative development;
4. stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people;
5. promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations;
6. providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts;
7. fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity;
8. supporting the oral tradition;
9. ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information;
10. providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups;
11. facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills;
12. supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary.

### Funding, legislation and networks

**The Public Library** shall in principle be free of charge. The public library is the responsibility of local and national authorities. It must be supported by specific legislation and financed by national and local governments. It has to be an essential component of any long-term strategy for culture, information provision, literacy and education.

To ensure nationwide library coordination and cooperation, legislation and strategic plans must also define and promote a national library network based on agreed standards of service.

The public network must be designed in relation to national, regional, research and specific libraries as well as libraries in schools, colleges and universities.

### Operation and management

**A clear policy must be formulated**, defining objectives, priorities and services in relation to the local community needs. The public library has to be organized effectively and professional standards of operation must be maintained.

Cooperation with relevant partners - for example, user groups and other professionals at local, regional, national as well as international level - has to be ensured.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### UNESCO Public Library Manifesto (continued)

Services have to be physically accessible to all members of the community. This requires well situated library buildings, good reading and study facilities, as well as relevant technologies and sufficient opening hours convenient to the users. It equally implies outreach services for those unable to visit the library.

The library services must be adapted to the different needs of communities in rural and urban areas.

The librarian is an active intermediary between users and resources. Professional and continuing education of the librarian is indispensable to ensure adequate services.

Outreach and user education programmes have to be provided to help users benefit from all the resources.

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### Discussion: Learning about your own library

The Library CEO and any returning board members are responsible for providing an orientation for new library trustees. New trustees need to understand the basics of the public library and the board's authority. The following is a list of information which should be provided to new trustees as part of their orientation.

#### Tour of the library building(s)

The new trustee should be given a tour of the main public library facility and should be introduced to staff members. Give the trustee a map of the library, a list of staff members, and any other public library handouts which are provided to the public. The tour should include details of each department (if there are separate areas) and its function in relation to the work of the entire library. If the library has a number of facilities, through the course of the first year, the new trustees should tour as many of the facilities as possible. As possible, the board may wish to hold board meetings at various facilities.

#### Documentation:

- Mission statement and strategic plan
- Policy manual
- Budget
- Board minutes
- Annual report
- Library calendar (e.g., board meeting dates; key deadlines – budget to council, Annual Survey of Public Libraries; trustee training – OLS-N conferences, OLA)
- Parliamentary rules followed at board meetings
- List of current board members and contact info, e-mail addresses

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Discussion: Learning about your own library (continued)

### Overview of library services

Official Library name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address of main branch or administration office:

Telephone number: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail addresses- General library: \_\_\_\_\_

CEO: \_\_\_\_\_

Library website URL: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Library CEO: \_\_\_\_\_

### Service:

Population served: \_\_\_\_\_ Number of households: \_\_\_\_\_

Contract population, if applicable (give name of municipality and population):

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of service point/branch	Hours open per week	Accessible?
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		
Total number of service points:		

### Holdings and collections

Total number of volumes held in library system (English): \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of titles held in library system (English): \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of volumes held in library system (French): \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of titles held in library system (French): \_\_\_\_\_

### Circulation

Annual circulation : \_\_\_\_\_

### Interlibrary loan

Total number of items borrowed through interlibrary loan: \_\_\_\_\_

Total number of items lent through interlibrary loan: \_\_\_\_\_

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Discussion: Learning about your own library (continued)

### Overview of library services (continued)

#### Reference

Annual reference requests: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Annual library visits

Visits to the library (based on number of visits during 'typical week'): \_\_\_\_\_

#### Programs

Annual program attendance: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Staffing

Professional librarians: \_\_\_\_\_

Library technicians: \_\_\_\_\_

EXCEL graduates: \_\_\_\_\_

All other staff: \_\_\_\_\_

Total staff: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteers: \_\_\_\_\_

#### Awards

Listing and short description of any awards won by the library / staff

#### Special grants

Received by library in past year

#### Community partnerships

Brief description of community partnerships and program description

#### Current library association memberships



## Legal Responsibilities

There are a number of legal responsibilities and liabilities that fall upon the members of a public library board. These arise from legislation governing public libraries (The **Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44**, the **Corporations Act** and the **Municipal Act 2001**) as well as other specific laws that library boards must also know and respect. This section draws your attention to these very important pieces of legislation and the responsibilities and liabilities that flow from them.

### Directors' liability

(adapted from *Sourcebook for Small Public Libraries: Administration 3: Director's Liability*)

The duty of a public library board is to manage the affairs of its library so as to achieve the objectives set out in the **Public Libraries Act, Revised Statutes of Ontario, 1990, chapter P.44**. This primarily involves the organization and delivery of library services. In carrying out this mandate, each member of the board has responsibilities to many different sectors of society: the public utilizing the library, library employees, creditors, the appointing council, the other directors, and various levels of government. **However, the overriding duty is to act in the best interest of the library.** This is the board member's fiduciary duty.

Several statutes are relevant to the duties of public library board members:

- Library boards are defined as local boards in the **Municipal Affairs Act**
- Public libraries are given separate corporate status as non-share capital corporations in the **Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44**
- Therefore the **Corporations Act** also applies in determining the duties and liabilities of members of public library boards.

#### a) Standard of care

The **Corporations Act** does not contain a statutory standard of care, and so, the standard of care for directors of non-profit corporations comes from the common law. The common law duty of care was enunciated in 1925 in the case of **Re City Equity Fire Insurance Co. Ltd.** which set out a subjective test: a director must exercise that care which may be reasonably expected from someone of "his knowledge and experience". Directors are therefore not responsible for everything that goes wrong and are not liable for mere errors in judgment.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Directors' liability

#### Standard of care (continued)

In determining whether a breach of the director's duty has occurred, each director is judged independently. It is a measure of protection for each director that he or she will be judged on his or her own knowledge and experience and not by an objective standard applied to a skilled professional, except for those directors who are appointed by virtue of a special skill or some particular expertise.

The following outline of the general duties of a director will serve to give the essential flavour of the overall responsibility of a director.

Standard of care	
<b>Honesty</b>	This common law duty has been codified in business corporations' statutes but not in the <i>Corporations Act</i> . It generally means that a <b>director must act honestly, in good faith and with a view to the best interests of the library</b> . It would constitute a breach of this duty to act fraudulently or to make a secret profit.
<b>Loyalty</b>	This duty means that a <b>director's personal interest cannot conflict with his or her duty to the library</b> . As well, a director cannot personally profit from his or her position.
<b>Diligence</b>	This duty means that a <b>director is obligated to make those inquiries that he or she would make in managing his or her own affairs</b> . Once again, this is a subjective test based on the knowledge and experience of the director. This takes the practical form of being prepared for and attending all board meetings. It is important to note that a director cannot relieve himself or herself of this duty by relying on other directors or by doing nothing or by being willfully blind to wrongful acts of the board as a whole, or other directors individually.
<b>Skill</b>	<b>The skill required of a director is measured as the degree of skill expected from a person of the director's knowledge and experience</b> . If a director has a particular skill or area of expertise, he or she must use that knowledge for the benefit of the library.
<b>Prudence</b>	This duty is merely common sense: <b>a director must act carefully, deliberately, and cautiously, and must try to foresee the probable consequences of a proposed course of action</b> .

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Directors' liability

### b) Conflict of interest

The area of conflict of interest and corporate opportunity illustrates the overlapping duties of a director. It is probably one of the major worries of a director of a public library since the appointing body is a municipal government. Conflict of interest can arise in two major ways:

1. Where a director is motivated by considerations other than the best interests of the library; or
2. Where the director has a personal interest in a contract with the board either as an individual or as a member of another organization.

Please note that the concept of personal gain is also perceived as conflict of Interest.

The area of conflict of interest is an area where the significance of the public library board as a local board is relevant. While the *Corporations Act* does provide a procedure for dealing with conflict of interest for corporations, the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter M.50 provides a much more detailed code of conduct in such situations. In the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, the interest of a director is specifically stated to include the interest of a parent, spouse, or child. In disclosing the interest, the director is also **specifically prohibited from participating in the discussion and, if it is in a public meeting (which the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44 requires in most cases), then the director must actually leave the meeting.**

This **Act** further provides that an elector can bring the director before a judge to determine the question of conflict at any time within six years from the date of the alleged conflict. Section 10 provides the remedies when a judge declares that a member has breached the provisions of this **Act** and that includes the power to declare the seat of the member vacant, disqualify the member for a period of not more than seven years and require the member to make restitution to the party or the municipality or local board suffering the loss. Finally, this **Act** also has a helpful procedure which allows a board to obtain the authority necessary to discuss an issue if the conflict results in two or fewer directors being available for a vote.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Potential legislative liability

There are many specific statutes which are of particular interest to directors of public library boards in their personal capacity. It is important for all board members to be aware of these laws.

Legislation	Potential liability
Corporations Act (Ontario)	S81: directors of a corporation are jointly and severally liable to the employees for not more than 6 months wages and 12 months vacation pay (if the board has been sued for the debt within 6 months after it has become due and the employee has been unable to satisfy the debt) as well as for technical offences (e.g., failure to produce books or records to an auditor acting for the members). Resigning as a director does not automatically extinguish all of the director's liabilities.
Canada Corporations Act	Same liability for wages and vacation pay as Ontario Corporations Act except the action against the director must start within 12 months of ceasing to be a director and also for technical offences.
Income Tax Act	Personal liability on directors if corporation fails to deduct, withhold or remit taxes.
Workplace Insurance and Safety Act	Individual directors who authorize, permit or acquiesce to any contravention of the legislation by the corporation is a party to and guilty of the offence.
Employment Standards	Individual directors who authorize, permit or acquiesce to any contravention of the legislation by the corporation is a party to and guilty of the offence.
Occupational Health and Safety Act	Directors have a positive legal duty to take all reasonable care to ensure that the corporation complies with the act and its regulations.
Pay Equity Act	Directors may be subject to penalty where the officer or director caused or acquiesced in the breach of the organization's statutory duty to its employees.
Employment Insurance Act	Director is liable if corporation does not deduct or remit employment insurance premiums.
Environmental Protection Legislation	All reasonable care taken to prevent discharge of contaminants.
Municipal Affairs Act	Individual directors who authorize, permit or acquiesce to any contravention of the legislation by the corporation is a party to and guilty of the offence.
Pension legislation	Director is liable if corporation does not deduct appropriate amounts under the Canada Pension Plan.
Criminal Code	Personal liability for directors for offences such as defrauding creditors.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Potential legislative liability (continued)

'Standard of care' is an area which will affect every director of a public library board. The following excerpt from "Liability of Directors for Corporation Taxes" by Vern Krishna published in the June 1984 edition of *Canadian Current Tax*, although seemingly dated, is still relevant and may provide some comfort regarding what constitutes an adequate standard of care, diligence and skill on the part of a director:

- "a director is not bound to give continuous attention to the affairs of his corporation
- a director is entitled in respect of his duties to rely upon the officials of the corporation to keep him informed on corporate developments
- a director, in the absence of grounds for suspicion, would usually be justified in trusting his officials to execute their duties according to corporate policies

### Thus, the directors of a corporation might be expected to:

- **establish corporate policies** in respect of accounting for income tax, both under Part 1 of the *Act* in respect of the corporation's own tax liabilities and in respect of withholding from employees, and payments to non-residents;
- **call upon the financial officers** of the corporation **to report** upon compliance with established corporate policies;
- **obtain undertakings from senior corporate officials** that corporate policies in respect of income tax and other financial matters have in fact been complied with during the relevant period."

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Defensive practices to protect the board

(adapted from *Duties and Responsibilities of Directors in Canada*, by J.M. and Mark Wainberg)

1. Attend all meetings of the board;
2. Insist on receiving, and then reading, before each meeting, all documents and reports on which there will be a vote;
3. Review all minutes of meetings;
4. Keep personal notes of the meetings;
5. Keep all minutes and notes in one notebook or folder, along with any other important documents, such as lists of current directors and staff, all written library policies, any special reports, reports to municipal council or the Ministry, etc.;
6. Insist on written legal opinions for any important step about to be taken;
7. Insist on written professional opinions from specialists on whose advice the board is expected to act. As well, if a director is a specialist, but a matter comes up which is not within his or her area of expertise, at least put it on the record, if the board does not get an outside opinion;
8. Insist on the minutes recording any disclosure made by any director or a director's refraining from voting or a director's dissent;
9. Vote against any disbursement if there is any question of the solvency of the board;
10. Send a letter by registered mail to the board, with a copy to the municipal council, if the secretary or chairman refuses to record a disclosure, or refraining from a vote, or dissent.
11. Be familiar with relevant legislation, such as the ***Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44***;
12. Be familiar with the library's program and personnel;
13. Consult with your insurer to conduct a risk appraisal and follow up on problem areas, such as staff and volunteer training;
14. Have regular meetings, more than required, if necessary;
15. Review the library insurance on a regular basis.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Indemnification and insurance

The ***Corporations Act*** permits a corporation to indemnify a director in respect of costs incurred defending himself or herself from an action based on his or her position as a director, except for costs rising out of willful neglect or default.

Example: ***Lorenc v. Koteles (1981) 14 Man. R. (2d) 427,***

The Manitoba Folk Arts Council sued its chairman, a lawyer, for an accounting of corporation money he paid himself as wages, without the consent of the council. The director lost the case since his actions were considered to be willful neglect or default and he was therefore clearly acting outside his authority. Indeed, this was such an extreme situation that criminal charges were laid against the director. Note that the indemnity must be specifically given by the corporation and is not an automatic right.

Usually insurance is recommended to back up any form of indemnity. The question of whether directors' liability insurance should be purchased is a matter of risk management. There are no reported cases of a successful action against a director of a non-profit corporation for breach of his or her duties which would be compensable by an insurer. While there are directors' liability insurance policies for non-profit corporations, which are cheaper than such policies for directors of business corporations, the expense of such insurance may be quite high in comparison to the risk.

Most actions against directors are commenced by disgruntled shareholders who have a direct pecuniary interest in the outcome of the litigation. However, the reality of a public library board is that the director's appointment is more likely to be terminated by the appointing body for any breach of his or her duty than for the director to be sued. Finally, any of the biggest dangers, such as conflict situations where a profit has been made, would be excluded under directors' liability coverage or would increase the cost of the insurance coverage so as to make it absolutely prohibitive.

It is also important to note that most municipalities and counties cover their local boards as well as their councils.

## Implications of the *Municipal Act* on Public Libraries

Public libraries in Ontario are subject to certain requirements of the *Municipal Act* because they are municipally established local boards. In December 2001, a new Municipal Act (*Municipal Act, 2001, S.O. 2001, Chapter 25*, hereinafter referred to as the *Act*) was passed by the Ontario Legislature. This *Act* gives municipalities a broad new flexibility to deal with local circumstances, and to react quickly to local economic, environmental or social changes. A new feature of the *Act* is the transparency /accountability provisions aimed at ensuring taxpayers can easily understand how their municipality operates. **As part of this requirement, municipalities and local boards must have policies – adopted by bylaw or in the case of local boards by resolutions – that will be used for procuring goods and services as well as for the hiring of relatives.**

The information posted here is from the Ministry's document called *Municipal Act, 2001 - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries* which is posted in the "Libraries" section of the Ministry website at [http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/municipal\\_act\\_q\\_a.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/municipal_act_q_a.shtml). It covers four of the other changes to the Municipal Act which have some bearing on libraries. The Ministry has provided these Frequently Asked Questions to assist public libraries in understanding some things set out in the [Municipal Act, 2001](#) but does not cover all matters relating to that legislation.

### ***Municipal Act, 2001, - General***

#### **Why are public libraries affected by the *Municipal Act, 2001*?**

Public libraries are affected by the *Municipal Act, 2001*, because they are municipally established local boards. As such, they are included in the Act's definition of local boards for the purposes of that Act.

### ***Public Library Board Governance and Municipal Services Boards***

#### ***The Municipal Act, 2001, s. 195 provides for the establishment of municipal services boards. Can these boards replace public library boards?***

No. *Municipal Act, 2001*, clause 195 (2) (b) provides that a municipality may give control and management of municipal services to a municipal services board *by delegating to the board all or part of the municipality's powers under any Act related to the municipal services*. The PLA allows municipalities to establish public library boards. Once established, the library board and not the municipality, operates the library. Therefore, it is possible for a municipality to delegate to a municipal services board its authority to establish a library board, but it cannot give a municipal services board the authority to operate a library.

### ***Contracting for Library Service***

#### **Can a municipality that has already established a library board, enter into a contract for library services with a neighbouring library board under the *Municipal Act, 2001, s.19 (1) (2)* and receive provincial operating funding under the *Public Libraries Act*?**

No. Although the *Municipal Act, 2001*, may permit a municipality that has already established a library board to enter into a library services agreement with a neighbouring library board, such an arrangement would not be consistent with the provisions of the PLA.



## Library Board Development Kit

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### Implications of the *Municipal Act* on Public Libraries (continued)

*PLA* s. 29(1) enables organizations such as the council of a municipality, a local service board, the council of a First Nation band to, instead of establishing or maintaining a public library, enter into a contract with a library board (see *PLA* for exact wording). *PLA* s. 30 provides for funding of municipalities that have entered into a contract with a neighbouring library board under *PLA* s. 29.

Under the *PLA*, a municipality cannot enter into an agreement with a neighbouring library board for library services when it has already established a library board. Once library boards have been established, any agreements regarding library service must be between boards, and there is provision for such board-to-board cooperation under *PLA* clause 20 (a).

#### **Financial Reporting Requirements - Audited Financial Statements**

**Does the *Municipal Act, 2001, S 296 (11)* on consolidated municipal statements mean that the *PLA* no longer requires a separate audited statement for the public library board.**

**The *Municipal Act, 2001*, states:**

***Municipal Act, 2001, S. 296 (11)* Where the financial statements of a municipality and a local board are consolidated, the municipality may require the local board to be audited as if it were part of the municipality, in which case, the auditor of the municipality is not required to provide a separate opinion with respect to the statements of the local board. 2001, c. 25, s. 296 (11).**

Both public library boards and First Nation Bands, Local Services Boards and municipalities that contract for library service receive library funding under *PLA* s. 30. It is a condition of *PLA* Regulation 976 1(b) that recipients of library funding under *PLA* s. 30 supply the financial statements and information to the Minister that are required under s. 37 of that Act. It is acceptable for a library board to supply its financial information in a consolidated audited financial statement as noted in *Municipal Act, 2001, s. 296 (11)*, provided that the financial information on the library board is provided in a separate schedule or appendix of the consolidated municipal financial statement.

In addition to this information concerning the *Municipal Act* and the public library, the Ministry has added a few other lists of questions and answers which are posted on their website at <http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/libraries/legislation.shtml>. One of the most important documents, besides the actual copy of the *Public Libraries Act*, is the "*Public Libraries Act* - Questions and Answers".

While Section 2 of this Kit had a piece called "Quick Reference Guide to the *Act*", we have reprinted a copy of the *Public Libraries Act* - Questions and Answers" to ensure that you have a copy of the document when you need it. This version, last modified in September 2007, is posted at <http://www.culture.gov.on.ca/english/library/plafaq.htm>, is the latest available version (and the *Act* has not been substantially changed since that date anyway)

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries

Disclaimer: The reason the Ministry is posting these Frequently Asked Questions on its website is to assist the public in understanding the general principles behind the establishment, administration and funding of public libraries as set out in the [Public Libraries Act](#). The Ministry is not providing legal advice on any of the issues.

### Library Service

#### 1. How can municipalities provide library service?

Under the *Public Libraries Act* municipalities may provide library service in a number of ways. They may establish a public library to serve their own municipality, or establish a union public library by agreement with one or more other municipalities, or when two-thirds of the municipalities in a county so request, a county may establish a county library to serve those municipalities. Instead of establishing a library board, a municipality may enter into an agreement whereby another library board will provide library service for that municipality.

#### 2. How may a Local Services Board provide for library services in an unincorporated area?

Local Services Boards may provide library services by either establishing a library or contracting for library service with a public library board, union library board or county library board. The ability of Local Services Boards to establish libraries is provided for in the Schedule to the *Northern Services Boards Act*.

### Public Library Boards

#### 3. How are public libraries established?

Public libraries are established under *Public Libraries Act* subsection 3(1) by the passing of a by-law by municipal council. When the by-law is passed under subsection 3 (1), the clerk is required to promptly mail or deliver a copy of the by-law to the Minister.

#### 4. How are public library boards composed? What proportion of their members can be municipal councillors?

A public library board is composed of at least five members appointed by municipal council. The number of council members on a public library board is limited to one less than a majority of the board.

### Union Public Library Boards

#### 5. How are union public libraries established?

Union public libraries are established by the councils of two or more municipalities making an agreement. The agreement specifies the proportion of the cost of the establishment, operation and maintenance of the union public library, including the cost of existing libraries, that will be paid by each municipality. When the agreement is made the public library boards established in the municipalities for which the union board is established are dissolved, and the assets and liabilities of those boards are vested in and assumed by the union board, unless the agreement provides otherwise.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries *(continued)*

### Union Public Library Boards *(continued)*

**6. What notification of the Ministry is required when a union public library is established?**

When an agreement is made to establish a union public library, the clerk of the municipality that has the greatest population is required to promptly mail or deliver a copy of the agreement establishing the union public library to the Minister.

**7. How are union public library boards composed? What proportion of their members can be municipal councillors?**

A union board is composed of at least five members appointed by the councils of the affected municipalities in the proportions and in the manner specified in the agreement establishing the union public library. The number of council members on a union public library board is limited to one less than a majority of the board.

### County Libraries

**8. How is a county library established? Must all municipalities in the county take part?**

A county library is established by county by-law. The resolutions of at least two-thirds of the municipalities forming part of a county are required for the establishment of a county library. When the county library system is established, the municipalities which do not wish to take part in that system are not required to do so.

**9. How are county library boards composed? What proportion of their members can be municipal councillors?**

A county library board is composed of at least five members appointed by the county council. The number of council members on county library board is limited to a bare majority of the board.

**10. Can a municipality leave a county library system?**

The *Public Libraries Act* is silent on this issue. Libraries are advised to seek legal advice should questions on this subject arise.

**11. Does a county public library system continue to be legally constituted if the number of municipalities that take part in the county library drops beneath 2/3?**

Subsection 7(1) of the *Public Libraries Act* allows a county to pass a by-law establishing a county library where 2/3 thirds of the municipalities forming part of the county for municipal purposes so request. This is a pre-condition for the passing of such a by-law, and for the by-law to be valid the precondition must be met. There is nothing in the *Public Libraries Act* setting out any continuing qualifications for such a by-law. It is valid if at the time of its making the pre-condition was met, despite what may happen after the by-law is made.

**12. Under what circumstances may a county library close a branch?**

Section 21 of the *Public Libraries Act* requires a county library board to operate a branch library in each local municipality that operated a public library before that municipality became part of the county library system, unless the county council and the council of the municipality concerned agree otherwise.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries *(continued)*

### Contracting for Library Service

**13. May a municipality provide for library service if it does not establish a library?**

Yes, under *Public Libraries Act* subsection 29 (1), a municipality may enter into a contract for library service with a public library board, union board or county library board, instead of establishing its own library.

**14. May a library charge a fee to residents of a municipality that contract with them for library service?**

No. The prescribed conditions for library operating funding do not permit a library to charge fees to residents of contracting municipalities. See subsection 30(2) of the *Public Libraries Act* and Regulation 976.

**15. May a municipality that has contracted for library service charge its residents a fee for that service?**

No. Municipalities that contract for library service receive operating funding from the province. The prescribed conditions of that funding preclude a municipality's charging residents a fee for library service.

### Legislation

**16. What legislation applies to a public library board?**

Municipalities are given the power under the *Public Libraries Act* to establish public library boards. If established, public library boards are governed specifically by the *Public Libraries Act*. But since public library boards are both local boards of a municipality and are corporations, the general legislation that applies to those entities also applies to public library boards. A number of statutes affect public libraries other than the *Public Libraries Act*; however, if there were an inconsistency between a provision of the general legislation and a provision of the specific legislation, the *Public Libraries Act* provision would take precedence with respect to a public library board. This is the case, unless the general legislation indicates otherwise, e.g. where the legislation states that it operates "despite any other Act".

### Library Governance

**17. How are libraries governed?**

Public libraries are governed by public library boards which are corporations established under the *Public Libraries Act*.

**18. Can a library be governed by a committee of council?**

The *Public Libraries Act* does not provide for committee of council governance for libraries. A library may be governed by a committee of council only if a Private Statute has been enacted that allows for governance by a committee of the particular council.

**19. When are library board appointments made?**

Board appointments are made at the first meeting of council in each term. If the council fails to make the appointments at its first meeting, it must do so at any regular or special meeting held within sixty days after its first meeting. The existing library board continues until the new appointments are made.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries *(continued)*

### Library Governance *(continued)*

#### **20. What are the qualifications for appointment to a library board?**

The following individuals are qualified for appointment to a library board under the *Public Libraries Act*:

A person who is a member of the appointing council (the qualifications for which are found in the *Municipal Act*);

Or

A person who is at least eighteen years old, is a Canadian citizen, and is:

- A resident of the municipality for which the board is established or the area served by the board in the case of a county library cooperative board, and is not employed by the board or the municipality; or.
- A person who resides in a municipality or a Local Services Board area that contracts with the library board for service; or
- 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 from it library services for the residents of the second board.

#### **21. May the mayor have ex-officio status on a library board, and does this restrict his or her abilities?**

An “ex officio” member of a board is one who is a member by virtue of his or her office. For example, if the mayor had ex officio status on a library board, the person who filled the office of mayor each term would automatically be a member of that board. An ex officio board member has full board member privileges such as the right to vote and is also subject to all the duties and liabilities of a board member unless otherwise restricted by way of the corporate articles or by-laws or by an applicable statute.

#### **22. Under what circumstances would a library board member be disqualified?**

A library board member is disqualified under *Public Libraries Act* section 13 if he or she:

- is convicted of an indictable offence;
- becomes incapacitated;
- is absent from the meetings of the board for three consecutive months without being authorized by a board resolution;
- ceases to be qualified for membership under the *Public Libraries Act*, or
- otherwise forfeits his or her seat.

#### **23. May library board members receive honorariums?**

The *Public Libraries Act* is silent on the receipt of honorariums. However, section 18 of the *Act* does provide for the following remuneration of board members' expenses:

- A board may reimburse its members for proper travelling and other expenses incurred in carrying out their duties as members. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 18.
- Library boards seeking guidance on the issue of honorariums may wish to consult with their own legal counsel.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries *(continued)*

### Library Board Appointments and Residency

#### 24. How is resident defined?

The *Public Libraries Act* does not define "resident" and therefore the word resident is to be interpreted according to its ordinary and normal meaning. That is, a resident is someone who normally resides in the jurisdiction in question.

#### 25. Under which circumstances may a non-resident be appointed to a library board?

A non-resident may be appointed to a library board if he or she is:

- a resident of a contracting municipality, a contracting Local Services Board area, or is a member of an Indian Band that has a contract with the board; or
- a member of a second board that has entered into a contract with the board to purchase from it library services for the residents of the second board.

#### 26. Can someone who owns a business in the area, but is not a resident, be appointed to a library board?

No, residency is required.

### Conflict of Interest and Library Boards

#### 27. Can the spouse of a library employee sit on a library board, or would that constitute a conflict of interest?

A board member's being married to a library employee is not in itself a conflict of interest. However, the board member would have to declare a conflict should a matter arise that would have an impact on the employee or board member. For example, if the library board member was the Library CEO's spouse, and the board was deciding whether to increase the CEO's salary, the board member would have to declare himself/herself in a conflict of interest, and withdraw from any discussion of or vote on the matter.

### School Board Representatives

#### 28. Is there a reporting relationship between a library board member whose appointment was recommended to council by a school board and the school board that made the recommendation?

The *Public Libraries Act* is silent on this matter, however, once a library board member is appointed, his or her role is as member of the library board not a spokesperson for the school board.

### Library Finance and Administration

#### 29. Must a library have a Chief Executive Officer?

Yes. Appointment of a CEO is required under subsection 15(2) of the *Public Libraries Act*. The CEO has general supervision over and direction of the operations of the public library and its staff, attends all board meetings and has other powers and duties that the board assigns to him or her from time to time.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries *(continued)*

### Library Finance and Administration *(continued)*

**30. May a library provide for such administrative functions as payroll, by entering into an agreement with its municipality?**

Yes. A number of library boards and their municipalities already carry out administrative functions in this way. However, where such administrative financial agreements exist, directions regarding the disbursement of library funds remain the prerogative of the library board.

**31. May a library have a reserve fund?**

The *Public Libraries Act* is silent on the subject of reserve funds. While it is common practice for municipalities to hold library reserve funds, library boards do have authority to have reserve funds under the *Municipal Act*.

**32. What is the library estimates or budget process?**

Library boards submit estimates to their appointing council or councils annually. The estimates are submitted in the form required by the council or councils and they must include all amounts required during the year for the purposes of the board. If there is more than one appointing council the estimates are required to include a statement on the proportion of the estimates to be charged to each of the municipalities. Council may, in the approval of the board's estimates or at any time at the board's request, authorize the board to apply a specified amount or percentage of the money paid to it otherwise than in accordance with the estimates as approved.

**33. Who conducts the library audit?**

The *Municipal Act, 2001*, s. 296 requires municipalities to appoint an auditor licensed under the *Public Accountancy Act* to annually audit the accounts and transactions of the municipality and its local boards and to express an opinion on the financial statements of these bodies based on the audit. Please see the *Municipal Act, 2001*, for more detailed information on municipal auditor. The *Public Libraries Act* subsection 24(7) requires that the auditor appointed under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, s. 296 conduct the library audit.

**34. May the library audit be included in the municipal audit?**

Both public library boards and First Nation Bands, Local Services Boards and municipalities that contract for library service, receive library funding under *PLA* s. 30. It is a condition of *PLA* Regulation 976 1(b) that recipients of library funding under *PLA* s. 30 supply the audited financial statements and information to the Minister that are required under s. 37 of that Act. It is acceptable for a library board to supply its financial information in a consolidated audited financial statement as noted in *Municipal Act, 2001*, s. 296 (11), provided that the financial information on the library board is identified. One way to do this would be in a separate schedule or appendix of the consolidated municipal financial statement.

**35. Is a library board required to have its own bank account?**

Yes. *PLA* s. 15 (4) requires the appointment of a library board 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 money received on the board's behalf to the credit of that account or accounts; and disburses the money as the board directs.

### Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries *(continued)*

#### Library Fees

#### **36. What services are free under the *Public Libraries Act*?**

Any of the following services provided by a library must be provided to residents free of charge (*Public Libraries Act* subsections 23(1) and (2)):

- admission to a public library or use in the library of the library's materials,
- reserving and borrowing circulating materials specified in section 2 of *Public Libraries Act* Regulation 976 \*,
- using reference and information services as the board considers practicable.

\* The following materials are specified in *Public Libraries Act* Regulation 976 section (2):

- books with hard, soft and paper covers,
- periodicals,
- newspapers,
- audio materials designed for people with disabilities,
- sound recordings,
- audio and video cassettes,
- tape recordings,
- video discs,
- motion pictures,
- film strips,
- film loops,
- micro materials in all formats,
- computer software, and
- multi-media kits.

#### **37. May a library charge a fee for service to people who are not residents?**

A library may charge non-residents a fee for service, providing their municipality, Local Services Board or Indian band council has not contracted for service with the library.

#### **38. May a library charge its users a fee to borrow materials on interlibrary loan?**

The *Public Libraries Act* precludes libraries from charging their users for materials borrowed on interlibrary loan, if the materials borrowed fall within the classes of materials prescribed in Regulation 976.

#### **39. May one library charge another to borrow materials on interlibrary loan?**

The *Act* is silent on the issue of one library charging another to borrow materials on interlibrary loan.

#### **40. If one library charges another library a fee to borrow materials on interlibrary loan, including an administrative fee, can the borrowing library pass the fee on to the person who requested the materials?**

No. The *Public Libraries Act* precludes libraries from charging their users for materials borrowed on interlibrary loan. Therefore libraries are not permitted to pass any interlibrary loan fee on to their users, including the passing on of any administrative interlibrary loan fee that the lending library has charged them.



# Library Board Development Kit

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## Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries *(continued)*

### Library Funding

**41. Where is provincial funding for libraries addressed in the *Public Libraries Act* and who is eligible?**

Library operating funding is addressed in section 30 of the *Public Libraries Act*. The following organizations are eligible for library operating funding:

- library boards,
- councils of Indian bands or Local Services Boards that have established public libraries,
- municipalities, Local Services Boards, Indian bands that have a contract for library services (under the conditions prescribed in *Public Libraries Act* subsection 29 (1)).

**42. What are the conditions for library operating funding?**

Organizations must comply with the *Public Libraries Act* and its Regulation to be eligible for provincial public library operating funding. Libraries and organizations that contract for library service must complete an annual survey, and submit it and their audited financial statement to the Ministry. Every organization that contracts for library service must also send a copy of that contract to the Ministry.

### French Language Services

**43. Does the French Language Services Act apply to libraries?**

No.

**44. Are French language services required under the *Public Libraries Act*?**

Section 20 (b) of the *Public Libraries Act* requires libraries to provide services in the French language, where appropriate.

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## Discussion: Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries

In reviewing the Public Libraries Act - Questions and Answers for Public Libraries you will note a few changes to the legislation. For example, the size of the library board is no longer specified in the same manner. For those who were familiar with the previous posting of questions (from 2000), you will note that there are different responses to several questions including #4, #19, #20, and #42. In addition, the section of questions from #28 to #35 has been altered to provide longer responses.

You should take some time to review each of the questions, either on your own or as part of the board discussion.

Then consider whether these responses help you to clarify the board's responsibilities under the *Public Libraries Act*.

## Role of the Board

### Governance

Simply stated the role of the library board is to govern. The phrase “governance” often refers to the board’s activities to oversee the purpose, plans and policies of the organization. Those activities include establishing an overall plan to achieve identified outcomes, developing and reviewing policies, supervision of the CEO, ensuring sufficient resources for the organization, ensuring compliance to rules and regulations, and representing the organization to external stakeholders.

The Board is the legal authority of the library and is responsible for the highest level of decision-making. While boards are accountable for the library’s services, they are not responsible for managing the programs or the people who carry out those programs. In other words library boards are not there to run the library, but to ensure that the library is properly run.

Governing is different from managing. The governing role differs from that of administration, in that governance requires different information. It deals with the long term, rather than the short, and with priorities, rather than details. The nature of governance is proactive and focused on the future, and on the relation of the organization to the community’s development.

The governance of the library is achieved through the board’s work in three main areas.

**Area 1- Defining the library’s purpose and direction.** The most important role of a board is mission stewardship. This begins with defining and articulating the library’s mission. Providing inspiration through the expression of a vision of library service is part of the stewardship of the mission as is defining new direction in response to changing conditions and community needs. This is achieved through the board’s planning work and monitoring progress towards the vision. The board makes key decisions about how best to use resources to support the mission.

**Area 2 - Delegating of authority to the staff to operate the library and deliver services.** The Board delegates authority to the CEO to manage the day to day operations of the library. The board directs the work of the CEO by establishing policies, budgets and plans that reflect the board’s strategic agenda.

# Library Board Development Kit

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**Area 3 - Advocating for Library Service.** The board must communicate to Municipal Council and the community the need for library service, report on the library's effectiveness in meeting the community's needs and advocate for the necessary resources to deliver service.

## Work of the board

### Area 1 - Define the purpose and direction of the library

**Plan** - One of the key roles of the board is to steer the library to achieve specific end results.

This begins with developing and refining the library's mission - so that the purpose is clear - and identifying certain results to be achieved that respond to the community's unique needs.

The board has a responsibility for expressing a vision for library service which inspires actions. Board members need the ability to vision, to think far enough ahead to both assess the past and to plan effectively for the future. In order to define community needs, the board must analyze and assess the library environment. This requires close and regular contact with the community.

Board members must understand the cyclical nature of planning and ensure that it takes place regularly. Once needs are identified and priorities set among them, certain service responses are chosen and staff develop the necessary plans to implement these. The board will monitor progress so the process continually moves forward.

**Measure and report on results** - The evaluation of the organization as a whole is dependent upon the identification of goals and objectives through a regular planning process.

Achievement of these goals and objectives is determined by measuring whether the programs and activities have achieved the results intended. The board must ensure that results are being measured rather than activities. This *Library Board Development Kit* includes a separate section on planning for more details.

**Set Policy** - Policy is an important governance tool. Written policies are based on collective values of the board, staff and community, and are integral to ensuring the continuity of the library board over time.

Setting policy is important board work because it is through discussing policy that the board expresses its philosophy and priorities. In working through tough issues, the board can reach decisions that provide a unified and clear message that will guide actions. For example, it is part of the board's work to decide the boundaries of governance and management. Unless there is clear direction, the board and the CEO will be confused about their respective roles.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Work of the board (continued)

### Area 1 - Define the purpose and direction of the library – Set Policy (continued)

All policies are approved at duly constituted board meetings, and are subject to regular review and revision. New board members should familiarize themselves with board policies.

The board sets policy on governance functions including each of the three areas of the board's work (direction, policy development, and advocacy) and the operations of the library.

The governance policies are developed in conjunction with the foundation documents that provide the basic framework for the governance of the library board. In a sense, these documents are higher level "policies", such as the **Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44**, the **Municipal Act**, the **Municipal Conflict of Interest Act** and the **Municipal Affairs Act**, and the enabling by-law enacted by the municipality to set up the library board. More details these foundation documents are covered in the section on 'Legal Responsibility', and so this section is only linking to library policy.

### By-laws and Governance Policies

The **Public Libraries Act** provides the basis of bylaws of the library board by specifying:

- Name of the board (Section 3)
- Powers and Duties of the Board (Section 20)
- Composition of the board (Sections 9-13)
- Officers and staff (Section 14 & 15)
- Meetings (Section 16)
- Authority

Bylaws are the regulations and procedures that specify board operations and governance policies regulate the business or work of the board. From the specifics of the **Public Libraries Act**, the library board would then create by-laws setting out the specifics of how the board is to operate. These governance policies that provide direction and elaborate on:

- The purpose of the board
- Board Orientation
- Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members
- Committees
- Policy Development
- Planning
- Financial Oversight
- Advocacy
- Evaluation of the CEO

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Work of the board (continued)

### Area 1 - Define the purpose and direction of the library – Set Policy (continued)

#### By-laws and Governance Policies (continued)

- Board Training
- Board Evaluation
- Succession Planning
- Delegation of Authority to the CEO

Sample governance policies have been published by SOLS in *Trillium Public Library: Sample Policies* available through the publication section of the SOLS website at <http://www.sols.org/publications/guides/trilliumpolicies/tofc.htm>. The samples include the following:

#### Foundation Policies

- Mission Statement - Policy Number: FN-01
- Vision Statement - Policy Number: FN-02
- Statement of Values - Policy Number: FN-03
- Intellectual Freedom - Policy Number: FN-04

#### Bylaws

- Statement of Authority - Policy Number: BL-01
- Composition of the Board - Policy Number: BL-02
- Terms of Reference of the Officers - Policy Number: BL-03
- Powers and Duties of the Board - Policy Number: BL-04
- Meetings of the Board - Policy Number: BL-05
- Amendment of Bylaws - Policy Number: BL-06

#### Governance Policies

- Purpose of the Board - Policy Number: GOV-01
- Board Orientation - Policy Number: GOV-02
- Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members - Policy Number: GOV-03
- Committee of the Board - Policy Number: GOV-04
- Policy Development - Policy Number: GOV-05
- Planning - Policy Number: GOV-06
- Financial Control / Oversight - Policy Number: GOV-07
- Board Advocacy - Policy Number: GOV-08
- Evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer - Policy Number: GOV-09
- Board Training - Policy Number: GOV-10
- Board Evaluation - Policy Number: GOV-11
- Succession Planning - Policy Number: GOV-12
- Delegation of Authority to the CEO - Policy Number: GOV-13

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Work of the board (continued)

### Area 1 - Define the purpose and direction of the library – Set Policy (continued)

#### Operational Policies

While the by-laws and governance policies are necessary, the library also works best with operational policies. Section 23(4) of the **Public Libraries Act** give the board the authority to make policy on use of library services, admission to the library, exclusion of disruptive persons, imposing fines, suspension of library privileges for breaches of rules, regulation of all other matters connected with the management of the library and library property.

The board's policies should address all aspects of library services and programs. Clearly written policies express the board's beliefs, sets out roles and responsibilities, and prescribe actions. Written policy also promotes consistent, objective decisions, and stands as a consistent record to which the community may refer. While the by-laws and governance policies are often developed by the board, the operational policies are commonly developed by library staff, for approval by the board.

These are some of the operational policies of a library.

#### Operational Policies

- Confidentiality & the Protection of Privacy - Policy Number: OP-01
- Safety, Security and Emergency - Policy Number: OP-2
- Accessible Customer Service - Policy Number: OP-03
- Collection Development Policy Number: OP-04
- Resource Sharing - Policy Number: OP-05
- Programming Policy - Policy Number: OP-06
- Internet Services Policy - Policy Number: OP-07
- Meeting Rooms - Policy Number: OP-08
- Community Information - Policy Number: OP-09
- Children and Teens Services - Policy Number: OP-10
- Unattended Children - Policy Number: OP-11
- Circulation - Policy Number: OP-12
- Local History - Policy Number: OP-13
- Information Services - Policy Number: OP-14

Samples of each of these operational policies have been published by SOLS in **Trillium Public Library: Sample Policies** available through the publication section of the SOLS website at <http://www.sols.org/publications/guides/trilliumpolicies/tofc.htm>.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Work of the board (continued)

### Area 1 - Define the purpose and direction of the library – Set Policy (continued)

In addition to governance and operational policies, the board will require several other types of policies including some on human resources and volunteers. The sample Trillium Public Library Policy Manual will eventually include a number of sample policies in this area, but currently has these :

#### Human Resources

- Human Rights - Discrimination and Violence
- Prevention of Workplace Violence

#### Volunteer Policies

- Volunteer Program - Policy Number: VOL-01
- Recruitment and Assignment - Policy Number: VOL-02
- Responsibilities of Volunteers Policy - Policy Number: VOL-03

## Work of the board

### Area 2 - Clearly delegate authority

Another element in the Work of the Board is to clearly delegate authority. Two important areas under the delegation of authority are to hire a qualified CEO and to evaluate the CEO annually.

**Hire a qualified CEO** - The *Public Libraries Act* requires the board to appoint a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) “who shall have general supervision over and direction of the operations of the public library and its staff, shall attend all board meetings and shall have the other powers and duties that the board assigns to him or her from time to time” Section 15 (2). The board must ensure that the library is run by a qualified CEO.

There should be a policy in place that clearly shows how authority is delegated to the CEO, outlines what the board expects the CEO to achieve (strategic goals and objectives), and identifies any requirements the board may have about how the CEO is to carry out his or her responsibilities. This policy must be supported by regular review and monitoring.

**Evaluate the CEO annually** - The evaluation of the chief executive officer is carried out by the board, based on a careful review of organizational goals and objectives and of the CEO’s adherence to the policies set by the board.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Work of the board (continued)

### Area 3 - Advocate for library Service

**Advocacy is that aspect of governance that is about relationships.** As a body appointed by the municipal or county council to provide library service to the community, the library board represents all of the community members – both those who use the library and those who do not. It is a key board responsibility to connect the library to community members and to the municipal council.

Municipal or county council, in most cases, also provides the majority of funding to the library. The board must ensure that the necessary resources are available to meet community needs. Consequently, the board must have regular and clear contact with the community and the council, and ensure that communication is two-way. The board must make certain that the community knows what the library can offer and determine the community's needs for library service. The board must then convince council of both the community's needs with respect to library service, and the potential of the library in meeting those needs. Adequate funding is the desired result of this process.

An understanding of advocacy is essential to working with council and with the community. Advocacy means “verbal support or argument for a cause.” It covers a broad range of activities. When we recommend something, we are advocating for it.

The key to advocacy is to “match agendas.” Council and library board both represent the same community. It is the job of the board to find where library plans and those of council come together, and to reach agreement to work together for the overall development of the community.

### Accountability of the board

Focusing on the work of governance will ensure that the board is accountable to the municipality and the community. Planning documents, budgets and policies provide detailed information about how the board's responsibilities have been carried out.

### Use resources wisely

Financial stewardship is a major aspect of the board's role in ensuring accountability. The board will have to know how its assets are protected and that resources are being used wisely. It is also necessary to know in advance what data the board needs in order to prove accountability. The board must demonstrate due diligence to ensure that there are adequate controls on how money is handled, purchases made, debts settled, and employees and customers treated. Financial control will be discussed in more detail in another section of this *Kit*.



# Library Board Development Kit

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## Accountability of the board (continued)

### Evaluate the board regularly

As part of being accountable a board needs to evaluate its own performance. Evaluation is the process by which the board determines if it is achieving what it should. The performance of the board is dependent upon the performance of all its members. The board is comprised of a number of individuals, but operates only as a single unit. No one board member or sub-group of members has any power to act unless delegated to do so by the entire board. Groups or teams are generally more difficult to evaluate than individuals since there are more players to be considered. It is also easier for the dynamics of a group to go awry.

John Carver, whose Policy Governance Model® offers a clear path to effective governance, emphasizes the importance of board self-evaluation. He suggests that self-evaluation is part of the task of governing. Rather than thinking of evaluation in a negative context, it is perhaps better considered as practicing a skill. If the board is not adept at assessing its own skills, how can it govern the skills and performance of others? For Carver, the best way, then, to determine how well you did a job is to assess whether you've done what you said you would do.

An evaluative process must speak directly to previously-set criteria (policies, goals and objectives that define what the library does and how it does it). Ideally, the full board should carry out the evaluation together. Since everyone is responsible for the success of the board, everyone is responsible for its evaluation. The board considers its own performance on a regular basis, preferably at every meeting, but at least annually.

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### Discussion: The role of the board

Here are some questions to discuss after reading this module.

1. Do all board members have a clear understanding of the board's work?
2. Has the board developed a complete framework for the library?
  - Mission?
  - By-laws and governance policies?
  - Operational policies?
3. Does the board have a plan for reviewing these as to their currency and continued appropriateness on a regular basis?
4. How is the board's meeting agenda related to, or is reflective of, the board's role?

## Meeting Management

### Board meetings

The *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44* states that “A board shall hold regular meetings once a month for at least 10 months each year and at such other times as it considers necessary.” This is a slight change in Section 16(1) which used to specify which months of the year that the board had to meet. Because it is only the entire board that has the authority to act, not individual board members, the board meeting is the major opportunity for the board to do its work - to make decisions, solve problems, educate board members, and plan for the future and review monitoring or evaluation material submitted by staff.

In this section of the Library Board Development Kit, we will look at various aspects of managing the board meeting including:

- Agendas
- Officers
- Committees
- Chairing more effective meetings
- Rules of order
- Closed sessions and confidentiality
- Board as a unit
- Code of conduct
- Minutes
- Preparation for meetings

### Agendas

It is important to plan meetings, to provide information to members so that they can be prepared to meet, and to run the meeting in such a way that the work is accomplished efficiently and effectively. The agenda is the ideal tool for meeting planning. It is more than a mere list of business items to be considered. It is an invaluable tool to focus discussion and use time productively.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Agendas (continued)

### Who creates the agenda?

The agenda is the plan for the board's work. The board and staff need to work together to create a workable overall meeting plan for the board's term. However, the CEO often produces the actual agenda for a specific board meeting. The CEO usually remains in place from board term to board term, but the board members may come and go. The ongoing experience of the CEO is a valuable resource for the board.

### How to focus board meeting agendas on board work and avoid administrative activities

- **The agenda should reflect the board's job** - Reviewing plans relating to library operations too often may tempt boards to be involved with day-to-day library operations. Board members may be unsure of what questions they should ask before approving a financial report unless there is a board member with specific expertise in finance. The result is often that board members are tempted to ask trivial questions that relate more to staff jobs than to their own.
- **Minimize focus on minor items or correspondence** - Provide a 'Correspondence summary' for complete copies of all correspondence, with one copy of correspondence available should a board member wish to refer to it. Those items that the board does not require for monitoring, or for decision-making, should be clearly labeled as items that are for 'Information only'.
- **Agendas should move the board forward** - The board's work is largely strategic and directed towards the future. Because the agenda is often prepared 'just in time' to get the board package into the mail, the monthly agenda may not be enough to keep the momentum going. There needs to be a long-term plan to move board work from month to month. Creating an annual agenda is a useful way to ensure that the board has the time to accomplish all of the necessary tasks over the course of the year. The board should be aware, well in advance, when budget discussions, key community events or recruitment plans must take place. The agenda should lead the board throughout its three-year term, enabling it to handle both the expected, and unexpected, business of library governance.
- **Agendas should allow for discussion of important matters** - It is important that, as a board, you come to value time spent in genuine conversation. While it is always tempting to want decisions to be made quickly and unanimously, the reality is that the bigger the decision is, and the more complex the situation, the greater the need is for conversation before the decision. In the context of board meetings where important decisions are being made, there must be time allotted for open-ended dialogue or conversation, in which everyone feels free to express their views and perspective, believing that they are contributing a valid piece of the overall picture. At the same time, everyone must be willing to change their views by learning something new. It is helpful to remember that dissent and differences are good because they ensure that more ideas get discussed and more factors taken into consideration. Multiple perspectives are any group's greatest asset because they lead to a fuller exploration of options before deciding on a course of action. Collective intelligence is a newly coined term that speaks to the power of multiple perspectives. By thinking well together, a group can access greater intelligence than any individual's capacity.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Agendas (continued)

- **Ideally, the annual agenda should also reflect the current goals and objectives the board is seeking to achieve as part of its strategic plan.** Relating the annual agenda directly to the results the board is seeking to achieve focuses board work on the future and on moving ahead. It also provides a means of tracking and evaluating its progress in meeting community needs.

### Three types of agendas

#### a) Annual agenda plan

Developing an annual agenda plan can be an invaluable tool in steering the board's work towards accomplishing specific results.

Month	Strategic issues	Information needed	Board action	Governance	Information needed	Board action
January						
February						
Et cetera						

The **Strategic issues** column identifies the strategic or critical issues the board must consider. The issues are major in nature and may be local or span the entire library community. Discussion of these issues will eventually result in board action, policy, and service responses. Once part of the library's overall service, they will be monitored and evaluated.

The next column, **Information needed**, should contain the information the board will need to support both discussion of, and action on, strategic issues. It will come up as needed.

The **Board action** column will contain the action proposed by the board as a result of strategic issues discussion.

The **Governance** column contains those activities the board must include on the agenda in order to fulfill its accountability obligations. For example, this column should include elements of the board's job that relate to accountability. It also includes items such as Policy development, review and revision, financial oversight, connections with council and the community, monitoring and evaluation, committee work such as CEO appraisal, facility planning or recruitment.

The next column, **Information needed**, should contain those reports and monitoring documents the board will need to review at any particular meeting.

The **Board action** column will contain the action proposed by the board as a result of governance discussions.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## **Agendas** (continued)

### **Three types of agendas** (continued)

#### **b) Annotated agenda**

Agendas should also give board members a clear idea of how to prepare for the meeting. An annotated agenda will provide information not just about the item to be discussed, but also what materials board members should read prior or bring to the meeting. A good agenda will also include an estimate of how long board members might expect to spend on particular items. The Board Chairperson and CEO will also have a more detailed agenda with notes relating to facilitation of the meeting.

#### **c) Consent agenda**

The consent agenda is a helpful device that public sector boards use to handle agenda items that don't require a great deal of discussion. Usually, a consent agenda facilitates passing a number of items with one single motion without discussion. However, the request of a single board member can move the item on to the regular agenda because it is no longer non-controversial. This technique is often used by school boards to cover the hiring of teachers. Library boards use the consent agenda to dispense with lengthy discussions on information items or reports.

## **Officers**

### **a) Chair and Vice-chair**

The ***Public Libraries Act***, Section 14(3) requires that the board elect one of its members as chair at its first meeting in a new term. Section 14(4) goes on to state that in the absence of the chair, the board may appoint one of its members as acting chair.

The function of the chair is to act in a leadership role to the board, ensuring that business is dealt with expeditiously, and also to help the board work as a team. It is also the chair's responsibility to be the presiding officer at board meetings and to act as an official representative of the library. The chair's term may be set out in the board's by-laws.

As the presiding officer, the chairperson must look after both the content and the process of the meeting. The 'process' element of a meeting deals with how agenda items are discussed, the style of interaction, group dynamics, and climate. This is often ignored, not discussed, during a meeting, but can often become troublesome if not managed effectively.

The chair has the same rights and responsibilities as other members of the board. In addition, the chairperson can vote on all questions (Section 16 (6)), and a tie is deemed to be negative. The Chairperson also has additional powers to call special meetings and may expel any person for improper conduct at a meeting under section 16 (3).

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Officers (continued)

### b) Secretary and Treasurer

Section 15(3) of the **Public Libraries Act** requires the board to “appoint a secretary who shall, a) conduct the board’s official correspondence; and b) keep minutes of every meeting of the board”. The secretary’s duty of keeping minutes also includes preparation of the agenda in cooperation with the chairperson and distribution of all reports and enclosures with the agenda (board package).

In Section 15(4), the **Act** further requires the board to “appoint a treasurer who shall, a) receive and account for all the board’s money; b) open an account or accounts in the name of the board in a chartered bank, trust company or credit union approved by the board; c) deposit all money received on the board’s behalf to the credit of that account or accounts; and d) disburse the money as the board directs”.

In Section 15(5), the **Public Libraries Act** also states that, “the same person may be both the secretary and the treasurer, and the chief executive officer appointed under subsection (2) may be the secretary and may be the treasurer”. Some library boards also appoint a ‘recording secretary’ for the express purpose of taking minutes at the meeting, and sometimes have a secretary for the board, as well as the recording secretary.

### c) Chief Executive Officer

The chief executive officer (CEO) is the person appointed by the board to administer the operation of the library. Generally, public library boards designate their senior staff member in the library as CEO and also appoint the CEO to be both treasurer and secretary. The primary reason for this arrangement is that a staff member has the time and resources needed to deal with the extensive and demanding workload required of a CEO, as well as the responsibilities of the secretary/treasurer. Since all records related to the board’s activities must be housed in the library, this staff member is conveniently situated near these records.

## Committees

Many boards use committees to assist the board in the job of governance. It should be noted that a committee’s task should be part of the work of the board, rather than the work of the staff. Committees should be time-limited and have a specific purpose, although many boards use Standing committees, such as ‘Personnel’ or ‘Finance’.

The major drawback in using committees is that they can interfere with the integrity of the board and can cause confusion for the CEO, or staff members, with respect to which ‘body’ has authority. This is especially true of an Executive committee, which can place the board’s authority in the hands of a few members. Consequently, many boards prefer to work as a ‘committee of the whole’, that is, the entire board undivided by committees.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Chairing meetings

Chairing a meeting means ensuring that a meeting achieves its aims. A library board meeting has been called for a specific purpose and all discussion at the meeting must be steered to this end, the library business. This may sound simple in theory but in practice it is a very demanding task.

In this section, a series of helpful actions for the meeting chairperson are noted:

**Be the chair** – do not mess in the operations

**Lead the board** - help board to a good job

- focus on the board work
- CEO works for entire board
- neither chair nor individual members instruct CEO

**Lead to define own job** –develop its own work plan

- goals and objectives and to attend to planning, policy and advocacy

**Lead the board to define discipline** –expectations for behaviour

- enforce norms of attendance, preparation, participation

**Lead board to evaluate performance** – at each meeting, and over the course of the year

- how time is spent at meetings
- progress towards objectives
- decision-making and implementation

**Take responsibility for the agenda** – reflect board, not staff work

**Run an effective meeting** – encourage discussion, facilitate participation, define problems, test for assumptions and understanding, summarize progress

## Meetings - Rules of order

Rules of order set out procedures for running meetings. These rules are essential to ensure that every trustee at the meeting has been heard and has had an opportunity to vote on all issues. The use of standard rules simplifies and expedites the business of the meeting.

The board may wish to adopt, as its official guide, one of the rules of order, such as Roberts, Bourinot, or Kerr and King. All of these rules of order describe formal meeting process, including how to present motions, conduct debate and vote on issues, as well as nominations and elections. The official citation for these rules of order is listed at the end of the module under the heading 'References'.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Closed meetings and confidentiality

Section 16.1 of the *Public Libraries Act* discusses occasions the issue of open and closed meetings with respect to a library board meeting. The specific elements of the *Act*, as revised in 2002, are as follows:

### “Open and closed meetings

**16.1 (1)** In this section,

“committee” means any advisory or other committee, subcommittee or similar entity of which at least 50 per cent of the members are also members of the board; (“comité”)

“meeting” means any regular, special, committee or other meeting of the board. (“réunion”)

### Open meetings

**(2)** Except as provided in this section, all meetings shall be open to the public.

### Improper conduct

**(3)** The board chair may expel any person for improper conduct at a meeting.

### Closed meetings

**(4)** A meeting or part of a meeting may be closed to the public if the subject matter being considered is,

- (a) the security of the property of the board;
- (b) personal matters about an identifiable individual;
- (c) a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the board;
- (d) labour relations or employee negotiations;
- (e) litigation or potential litigation, including matters before administrative tribunals, affecting the board;
- (f) advice that is subject to solicitor-client privilege, including communications necessary for that purpose;
- (g) a matter in respect of which a board or committee of a board may hold a closed meeting under another Act.

### Other criteria

**(5)** A meeting shall be closed to the public if the subject matter relates to the consideration of a request under the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* if the board or committee of the board is the head of an institution for the purposes of that Act.

### Resolution

**(6)** Before holding a meeting or part of a meeting that is to be closed to the public, a board or committee of the board shall state by resolution,

- (a) the fact of the holding of the closed meeting; and
- (b) the general nature of the matter to be considered at the closed meeting.

### Open meeting

**(7)** Subject to subsection (8), a meeting shall not be closed to the public during the taking of a vote.

### Exception

**(8)** A meeting may be closed to the public during a vote if,

- (a) subsection (4) or (5) permits or requires the meeting to be closed to the public; and
- (b) the vote is for a procedural matter or for giving directions or instructions to officers, employees or agents of the board or committee of the board or persons retained by or under contract with the board.



## Library Board Development Kit

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Clearly, all library board meetings are open to the public, unless the confidential nature of the business items under discussion requires that the meeting be closed. "Meetings" is defined in s. 16.1(1) to include any regular, special, committee or "other meeting of the board". One example of this type of special meeting would be a strategic planning meeting, and it follows that a public library board meeting focusing on strategic planning would need to be open to the public under the **Public Libraries Act**.

The board can take measures to conduct the different types of meetings, including strategic planning meetings, to be in compliance with the **Act** and to meet any local sound practices or accountability measures. For example, information about the meeting, and its focus or agenda, can be advertised and posted as a board meeting, and that the meeting will be open to the public. The location of all types of library board meetings should be identified, which is particularly important as strategic planning meetings may be at a location other than the library itself. Information about these additional meetings should be provided in the public board packages including the dates, time and location and purpose for board input. Minutes should be taken at all public board meetings, and minuted notes from those sessions should be included in subsequent public board packages.

Under Section 16.1(6) of the **Act**, if a board intends to hold a closed meeting, before the board holds the meeting, it **shall** state, by resolution, the fact that the board is holding a closed meeting and the general nature of the matter to be considered at the closed meeting. Remember that only those stipulations under Section 16.1 (4) can be used as reasons to hold a closed meeting. Once held, it is important for board members to respect the confidential nature of items discussed in closed meetings.

### Acting only as a unit

The individual trustee sitting on a board does not act alone or on behalf of the board unless specifically given the authority by the whole board to do so. It is the board that is the legal entity.

- individuals serving as library board trustees must endorse the mission of the library and care about the library
- it may help to think about this as an ethical responsibility
- these ethical responsibilities are in addition to the legal responsibilities we have just touched on and the ones that we are about to consider

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Preparation for meetings

It is the board member's responsibility to arrive on time and to be prepared for board meetings. This indicates how serious you are about ensuring effective meetings. In order for board members to prepare properly, meeting information should be circulated to everyone well in advance of the meeting, and should include meeting objectives and agenda, location/date/time, background information, and assigned reading or documents for preparation.

Meetings should begin and finish on time. Remember, attendance is extremely important. Board members are responsible for what happens at board meetings, even if they are not in attendance. Attendance at meetings is not only a responsibility, but also a protection for board members.

## Code of conduct

A code of conduct is a useful tool to deal with important issues regarding the board's conduct. A code of conduct covers many issues that regularly affect boards. While legislation often exists governing how boards must deal with certain issues, others are left to individual boards to manage. Discussing how to handle certain issues prior to becoming embroiled in them, prepares the board for action, rather than rendering it incapable if a serious issue arises. The code of conduct is an expression by a board of its agreement to conduct business in a particular way. It is, in effect, a commitment to carrying out its job with decorum.

A code of conduct sets out how the board will handle issues, such as conflict of interest, confidentiality, and limits on board member's actions. Conflict of Interest is a major concern. The ***Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*** governs library boards with respect to conflicts of interest. This legislation prevents board members from using their positions to obtain benefit from the organization for themselves or family members.

Issues not covered by legislation are less clear. For example, individual board members cannot exercise authority over the organization unless explicitly set forth in board policies. Interaction with the public, press or other entities, must recognize the same limitation and the similar inability of any board member or board members to speak for the board. This requires a firm commitment from the board to make decisions carefully and to speak with one voice.

As an example, Board Member's Code of Conduct from the Markham Public Library has been reprinted on the next page. It is also posted on this Ontario public library's website at [http://www.markhampubliclibrary.ca/docs/policies/board\\_policies.pdf](http://www.markhampubliclibrary.ca/docs/policies/board_policies.pdf).

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Code of conduct (continued)

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**POLICY TYPE: GOVERNANCE PROCESS**

**POLICY TITLE: BOARD MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT**

Revised: June 30, 2003, February 23, 2004, June 26, 2006

The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, businesslike and lawful conduct, including proper use of authority and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members.

- .1 Board members must be loyal to the interests of the diverse community they serve. This accountability supersedes any conflicting loyalty such as that to advocacy or interest groups and membership on other Boards, organizations or staffs. This accountability supersedes the personal interest of any Board member acting as an individual consumer of the organization's services.
  - .2 Board members must avoid any conflict of interest with respect to their fiduciary responsibility, by adhering to the regulations of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, as per attachment.
    - A. There will be no self-dealing or any conduct of private business or personal services between any Board member and the organization except as procedurally controlled to assure openness, competitive opportunity and equal access to inside information.
    - B. Board members will not use their positions to obtain employment in the organization for themselves, family members or close associates.
  - .3 Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization except as explicitly set forth in Board policies.
    - A. Board members' interaction with the CEO or with staff must recognize the lack of authority in any individual Board member or group of Board members except as noted above.
    - B. In the case of Board members or committees requesting information or assistance without Board authorizations, the CEO or staff can refuse such requests that require—in the CEO's judgement—a material amount of staff time or funds, or are disruptive.
    - C. Board members' interaction with the public, press or other entities must recognize the same limitation and the similar inability of any Board member or Board members to speak for the Board, with the exception of the Chair or designate.
    - D. Board members will make no judgements of the CEO or staff performance except as that performance is assessed against explicit Board policies or by the official process.
  - .4 Members will respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature, including but not limited to all personnel issues, certain financial and certain legal and property issues.
  - .5 Board members will be responsible for governing with excellence. Such responsibility will include:
    - A. Attendance
    - B. Informed preparation for Board deliberations
    - C. Speaking with one voice on a matter arising from a Board decision**
    - D. Policy making principles
    - E. Respective roles
    - F. Rules of order
-

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Minutes

Minutes are the permanent record of the proceedings of a board or committee meeting. The **Public Libraries Act**, Section 20(e), establishes that the board shall, "...ensure that full and correct minutes are kept".

Minutes should not record every single comment, but should note the general meaning of the discussion in enough detail to provide an accurate review of what occurred. The agenda provides the skeleton of items to be included in the minutes of the meeting. The minutes constitute a legal record of the proceedings and are considered public documents. Minutes are prepared by the secretary and should include the following:

- the date, time, place of meeting, regular or special meeting, name of board or committee
- the heading, "Minutes"
- a list of the members present and absent
- the name of the chairperson
- the status of previous minutes
- all motions, movers, seconders and results of votes, for example:
  - Moved by (name) that the minutes of the meeting of March 10, 2004
  - Seconded by (name)
  - Be approved.
  - Carried
- motion numbers for ease of reference, for example:
  - 2003:30 (The year and sequential number for each motion, beginning each year)
- a list of reports and documents discussed at the meeting
- a summary of significant points raised in debate; problems, suggestions and opposing points of view
- any commitments to undertake tasks made by the board or the CEO
- time of adjournment

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Discussion: Checklist to evaluate your meetings

### Checklist to evaluate your meetings

Consider reviewing meeting effectiveness at the end of each meeting, with suggested improvements applied to the next meeting. It may be useful to focus on different aspects at each meeting. Using a simple checklist can assist the board in continually improving the quality of board meetings. A sample is provided here.

Meeting evaluation	Yes	No	How To improve
1. Was the agenda comprised of board issues?			
2. Did the board try to delve into staff level issues?			
3. How did the board handle information items?			
4. Did all board members attend the meeting?			
5. Did board discussion allow for diverse viewpoints?			
6. Was the board able to reach collective decisions after appropriate discussion?			
7. Did board members participate fully in discussions?			
8. Did board members all take responsibility for keeping discussion to board issues and on topic?			
9. Did board members offer their individual expertise and receive the expert input of other members?			
10. Were board members able to point out when others deviated from current policy?			
11. Did board members attempt to represent the board without authorization?			
12. Did board members attempt to exert individual authority over the CEO/staff?			

## Financial control

Please note: The purpose of this section is to outline the basics of the board's financial role. Library boards and their municipalities or counties can deal with the financial fundamentals in a variety of ways.

### Financial role of the board

New board members require some time for orientation. Nevertheless, board membership implies immediate accountability for the library's financial affairs. There is no doubt that the board's role in relation to finances can be quite complicated.

The board's financial responsibilities are clearly outlined in the *Public Libraries Act*. In its accountability to the municipal council, the province, and the people it represents, the board undertakes to guarantee that the allotted funds are spent to best meet the needs of the community, and, are in accordance with the planned budget. This accountability means more than simple bookkeeping. Once council has approved the budget, the board must scrutinize the financial operations of the library. The board must consider its role very carefully here.

**Scrutiny by the board means reviewing to ensure that the financial affairs of the library are being well-managed, NOT to actually manage the financial affairs of the library.**

The board has already hired a competent CEO to do that job. There is a difference between monitoring the finances and running the library. Boards do not have time for day to day involvement. Their role is to see that the library is well-managed by constantly being alert to community needs, securing adequate funding and ensuring that the expenditure of library funds fulfils the library's stated goals and objectives.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Financial role of the Board (continued)

### Board treasurer

The **Public Libraries Act** states that the board must appoint a treasurer. Most public library boards in Ontario appoint the CEO as Treasurer and Secretary of the board because the CEO, as manager and administrator, is the person most likely to be aware of the day-to-day financial picture.

Section 15 (4) of the **Public Libraries Act** outlines these duties for the Treasurer:

#### **“Treasurer**

- (4)** A board shall appoint a treasurer who shall,
- (a) receive and account for all the board’s money;
  - (b) open an account or accounts in the name of the board in a chartered bank, trust company or credit union approved by the board;
  - (c) deposit all money received on the board’s behalf to the credit of that account or accounts; and
  - (d) disburse the money as the board directs.”

For clarification purposes, the Ministry has added a question in their **Questions and Answers** document (see Section 3 of this **Kit**) which states these same requirements again:

#### **35. Is a library board required to have its own bank account?**

Yes. *PLA* s. 15 (4) requires the appointment of a library board 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 money received on the board's behalf to the credit of that account or accounts; and disburses the money as the board directs

One final point about the treasurer and the separate library bank account can be found in the **Application for Public Library Operating and Pay Equity Grants** (posted at [http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/awards\\_funding/lib\\_operating\\_grant.shtml](http://www.mtc.gov.on.ca/en/awards_funding/lib_operating_grant.shtml) ). In the Terms of Conditions for accepting the grant, Section 5.1 states the following:

#### **“Holding of Grant - 5.1**

Until it is used in accordance with this Agreement, the Grant will be placed in an account that:

- resides at a Canadian financial institution; and
- is in the name of the Recipient.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Financial role of the Board (continued)

### Board treasurer

The actual procedures for handling of the library board's money varies from board to board. Some library boards handle their accounts completely, where others have the municipality look after payroll on their behalf. In some libraries, the library board has entered into an agreement with the municipality or county headquarters to handle some financial functions.

The Ministry has addressed this issue in its *Questions and Answers* document, which states:

**30. May a library provide for such administrative functions as payroll, by entering into an agreement with its municipality?**

Yes. A number of library boards and their municipalities already carry out administrative functions in this way. However, where such administrative financial agreements exist, directions regarding the disbursement of library funds remain the prerogative of the library board.

It is important to recognize that this arrangement can be extremely beneficial, but there are a few points with respect to the agreement that should remain clear. The board still must appoint a treasurer, as outlined in the *Public Libraries Act*, and have a separate bank account. Monies must be distributed as the board directs.

## Financial accountability to council

One of the three major responsibilities of a library board under the Public Libraries Act is to be accountable to the municipal/county/band council. This accountability falls into two main areas:

- Seek council's approval for real property and raising funds through debentures.
- Budget estimates and the audit (covered later in this section of the *Kit*)

### Real Property and Debentures

One of the areas that this accountability falls into is to seek council's approval for real property and raising funds through debentures. Under the *Act*, libraries can raise money through debentures. Section 25 covers this issue:

#### Debentures for library purposes

**25. (1)** The sums required by a public library board or union board for the purposes of acquiring land, for building, erecting or altering a building or for acquiring books and other things required for a newly established library may, on the application of the board, be raised by the issue of municipal debentures.



# Library Board Development Kit

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## Library Property and Debentures (continued)

Under the **Act**, libraries are allowed to hold real property. Section 19 covers this issue.

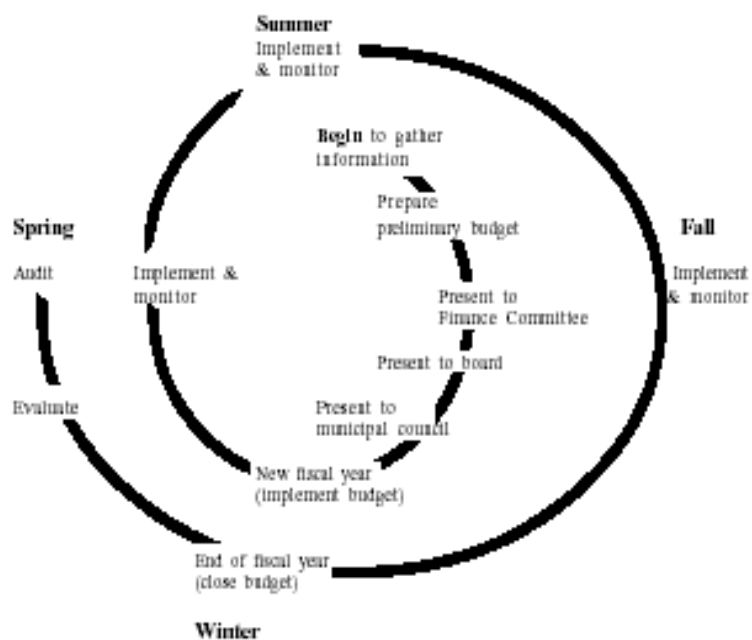
### Real property

**19. (1)** A board may, with the consent of the appointing council or, where it is a union board, the consent of a majority of the councils of the municipalities for which it was established,

- (a) acquire land required for its purposes by purchase, lease, expropriation or otherwise;
- (b) erect, add to or alter buildings;
- (c) acquire or erect a building larger than is required for library purposes, and lease any surplus part of the building; and
- (d) sell, lease or otherwise dispose of any land or building that is no longer required for the board's purposes.

## Budget process and the library board

The budget process is an important part of the library board's activities. The budget process is a year-round activity involving a series of stages. Before the budget process is finalized for one year, work already should have begun on the next year's budget. The development of a budget is part of the board's financial responsibilities, as is the monitoring of the financial reports through the year. Submitting budget estimates to the council is part of the financial accountability to council. Fortunately, the cyclical nature of the budget process allows new board members to "jump in" quite easily.



# Library Board Development Kit

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## Budget process and the library board (continued)

### Budget estimates to council

While some funding for a public library in Ontario does come from the province through the Public Library Operating Grant program, in most libraries, the bulk of the operating funds come from the municipal or county council. The *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44* outlines the relationship between the library board and the municipal council with respect to the presentation of a budget for the public library. The budget is called “estimates” and as outlined Section 24 of the *Act*, must be submitted to council in a format set by council on or before a date specified by council.

Section 24 outlines the following process for submitting estimates to council:

#### Estimates

**24. (1)** A public library board, county library board or county library co-operative board shall submit to the appointing council, annually on or before the date and in the form specified by the council, estimates of all sums required during the year for the purposes of the board.

#### Approval of estimates

**(2)** The amount of the board’s estimates that is approved or amended and approved by the council shall be adopted by the board and shall be paid to the board out of the money appropriated for it.

#### Idem

**(3)** The board shall apply the money paid to it under subsection (2) in accordance with the estimates as approved, subject to subsection (4).

#### Council may authorize variation

**(4)** The council may, in its approval of the board’s estimates or at any time at the board’s request, authorize the board to apply a specified amount or percentage of the money paid to it under subsection (2) otherwise than in accordance with the items of the estimates as approved.

And for the few union library boards left in Ontario, there are two extra sections:

#### Idem: union board

**(5)** A union board shall submit its estimates to each of the councils of the municipalities for which the board was established, and subsections (1), (2), (3) and (4) apply to the union board with necessary modifications.

#### Where two or more municipalities concerned

**(6)** A union board shall submit with its estimates a statement as to the proportion of the estimates that is to be charged to each of the municipalities, and if the estimates of the board are approved or amended and approved by the councils of the municipalities representing more than one-half of the population of the area for which the board was established, they are binding on all the municipalities.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Budget process and the library board (continued)

Once again, the Ministry has used the *Questions and Answers* document to address this issue. The Q & A document states:

### **32. What is the library estimates or budget process?**

Library boards submit estimates to their appointing council or councils annually. The estimates are submitted in the form required by the council or councils and they must include all amounts required during the year for the purposes of the board. If there is more than one appointing council the estimates are required to include a statement on the proportion of the estimates to be charged to each of the municipalities. Council may, in the approval of the board's estimates or at any time at the board's request, authorize the board to apply a specified amount or percentage of the money paid to it otherwise than in accordance with the estimates as approved.

From the **Act**, the council may ask for changes to the estimates presented by the library board, for example, to change a specific line to reflect a certain amount. It is recommended that libraries and library boards build relationships with the municipality, county representatives and council which results in less scrutiny of the library estimates, leaving financial responsibility for the library service to the appointed library board, within the framework of the **Act**.

Following approval of the estimates, the library board adopts the budget as their own. At that point, the spending authority rests with the library board. While there are references to variances, in most cases in normal circumstances, once the budget has been approved, Council has no further say on the library budget. Council must pay the amounts specified in the budget to the board, at the times and using agreed-upon procedures.

## Financial monitoring

The experienced board member views the monitoring phase of the budget process as vital in achieving responsible governance of library affairs. The tools most frequently used by library boards to ensure accountability are monthly financial reports and the audit.

### **c) Monthly financial reports for the board**

By reviewing and approving regular financial reports, the board not only fulfils its legal requirements and avoids being taken by surprise, but also, and perhaps more importantly, tracks the progress towards achieving established goals and objectives. The monthly financial report compares the amount of money actually spent and received with the projected targets set in the budget. It should give a current, accurate and up-to-date picture of library finances. Careful review of the monthly reports will alert the board to discrepancies before they become major problems.

## Library Board Development Kit

### Financial monitoring (continued)

- **What should the monthly financial report look like?**

Presented at each regular board meeting, the monthly financial report should give a current accounting of expenditures to date, as well as a comparison of expenditures with the overall annual budget. The report should follow the structure and categories of the budget, and list, in separate columns, the current month's revenues and expenditures, those for the year to date, and, finally, the budgeted amounts for the entire year. Some libraries suggest that a comparison be made with the previous year as well, while others include a column indicating the percentage of the budget spent to date. A "variance" column may also be included to indicate if a particular line item is over or under-spent. The sample below is included to show a reference point, and is not meant to be definitive.

	June	Year-to-date	2009 Budget
<b>Revenue</b>			
Municipal operating grant	0	20,000	29,764
Provincial operating grant	0	0	8,782
Provincial pay equity funding	0	0	2,000
Self-generated revenue	50	670	1000
Donations	100	100	150
<b>Total operating revenue</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>21,795</b>	<b>42,762</b>
Project grants program	0	0	0
Summer Experience student	1200	1,200	0
<b>Total special grants</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>	<b>1,350</b>	<b>22,995</b>	<b>42,762</b>
<b>Expenditures</b>			
Salaries, wages & benefits	2,127	12,762	25,522
Staff training	0	0	0
Materials - General	1,200	5,000	8,000
Materials - Electronic	0	0	0
Facilities/Utilities			
Insurance	1,300	1,300	1,300
Utilities	200	900	1,800
Maintenance and repairs	800	800	1,000
Equipment and furnishings	1,200	1,200	1,400
Telecommunications			
Telephone and fax	60	360	720
Internet connectivity costs	0	0	0
Computer services	1,100	2,200	1,100
Other: Audit	0	700	700
Other:Cataloguing and processing	100	300	400
Other:Postage and freight	50	100	250
Other:Advertising	50	90	150
Other:Memberships	120	120	120
Other:Miscellaneous	100	100	300
<b>Total operating expenses</b>	<b>8,407</b>	<b>25,932</b>	<b>42,762</b>
Project grants program	0	0	0
Summer Experience student	0	1,200	0
<b>Total special grants</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,200</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>8,407</b>	<b>27,132</b>	<b>42,762</b>

# Library Board Development Kit

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## **Financial monitoring** (continued)

### **a) Monthly financial reports for the board** (continued)

- **Knowing what questions to ask**

The monthly financial report should trigger a number of questions for each board member. Responsible action will require diligent answers and a clear understanding of the implications of these answers. However, questions surrounding the monthly financial report should not draw the board into the day-to-day operations of the library. Boards should not be involved in discussions over what titles are purchased, or over specific amounts in the budget. On the other hand, they would want to question the expenditure of 95% of the annual book budget in the first month of the fiscal year. Asking appropriate questions relating to the library's finances is crucial to accountability. The major concern of the board should be whether the money expended allows the library to achieve its stated goals and objectives, and provide the services that meet the needs of the community.

## **Financial monitoring**

### **d) Annual audit**

By law, the books of a corporation must be audited annually. An audit is an examination of financial records to determine their accuracy. Usually an auditor carefully looks over the journals, verifies that the entries correspond with the cancelled cheques and receipts, and performs several other checks to test the accuracy of the financial records.

An audit is a straightforward process, if the library has kept its records honestly and accurately. In preparing for an audit, the treasurer should make sure that he or she has gathered together all of the financial records for the period being audited. It is standard during an audit that the treasurer be asked for explanations for expenditures or revenue and for documentation (cancelled cheques, receipts, and bills) to substantiate expenditures. In general, the library should benefit from an audit since it will then have an independent statement as to the accuracy of the financial records.

The auditor makes an official report which includes an annual financial statement for the library, outlining the library's financial position at the year's end. This report should be distributed to all board members and municipal councillors, and copies should be kept on file by the CEO.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Financial monitoring (continued)

#### b) Annual audit (continued)

There are several notes about the audit, for example, that the annual audit of the public library board accounts and transactions must be carried out by an auditor appointed under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, section 296 and that it is acceptable for a library board to supply its financial information in a consolidated audited financial statement with that of the municipality, provided that the financial information on the library board is identified.

The Ministry has addressed these two stipulations in its *Questions and Answers* document, which states the following:

#### **33. Who conducts the library audit?**

The *Municipal Act, 2001*, section 296 requires municipalities to appoint an auditor licensed under the *Public Accountancy Act* to annually audit the accounts and transactions of the municipality and its local boards and to express an opinion on the financial statements of these bodies based on the audit. Please see the *Municipal Act, 2001*, for more detailed information on the municipal auditor. The *Public Libraries Act* subsection 24(7) requires that the auditor appointed under the *Municipal Act, 2001*, section 296 conduct the library audit.

#### **34. May the library audit be included in the municipal audit?**

Both public library boards and First Nation Bands, Local Services Boards and municipalities that contract for library service, receive library funding under *PLA* s. 30. It is a condition of *PLA* Regulation 976 1(b) that recipients of library funding under *PLA* s. 30 supply the audited financial statements and information to the Minister that are required under s. 37 of that Act. It is acceptable for a library board to supply its financial information in a consolidated audited financial statement as noted in *Municipal Act, 2001*, s. 296 (11), provided that the financial information on the library board is identified. One way to do this would be in a separate schedule or appendix of the consolidated municipal financial statement

It is also a condition of *Public Libraries Act* Regulation 976 1(b) that recipients of library funding, under *Public Libraries Act* section 30, supply financial information to the Minister. In the past, all libraries had to supply a copy of their audited financial statements to the Ministry. In 2010, the condition under which an audited financial statement had to be supplied was altered depending on the level of government support.

Depending on the amount of money received from the government in the previous year under the Operating and Pay Equity Grant programs, there are different requirements. If the Total Annual Ministry Funding received in the previous year was greater than \$100,000, the financial reporting requirement remains the Audited Financial Statement. If the Total Annual Ministry Funding received in the previous year was greater than \$25,000 and less than \$100,000, libraries can submit any one of the following: Audited Financial Statement, or Review Engagement, or Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing (MMAH) Financial Information Return (FIR). If the Total Annual Ministry Funding received in the previous year was less than \$25,000, libraries are only required to complete the *Annual Survey of Public Libraries*, Section B – Financial Report and include the date submitted to Ministry (yyyy/mm/dd).

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Financial policies

Finances concern library boards because trustees often do not have clear financial policies beyond an item in the by-laws about cheque-signing. There are a number of issues that should guide the CEO and/or the finance or audit committee with respect to finance. These should be clearly stated in policy. But what are those concerns? John Carver raises some of them in his discussion of Executive Limitations. These are “worry” areas that relate to how expenditures are planned and handled, and how resources and assets are protected.

Policies should be in place to govern how the Board intends to protect the actual, ongoing financial position of the library. One key area to consider is whether spending exceeds the amount of money received to date. Is there enough money to pay staff and bills? Are all deductions for tax and required filings done on time and accurately? Are there adequate controls on spending and purchasing processes? Is the CEO’s spending limit realistic for the size of the budget?

Financial policies should also provide guidelines for annual budget planning. Key among these guidelines is that the budget should reflect the library’s priorities and should not present an unrealistic expectation of funds. In other words, the library should be able to afford what it wants to do. By the same token, the library should not always be satisfied with the status quo. There must be enough money in the budget for adequate staff to do the work of the organization, and for staff training, as well as for board items, such as fiscal audit, legal fees, board meetings and board development.

- **Procurement policies required in 2005**

According to Section 271 (1) of the *Municipal Act*, a local board had to adopt policies with respect to its procurement of goods and services before January 1, 2005, including policies with respect to, the types of procurement processes that shall be used, the goals to be achieved by using each type of procurement process; the circumstances under which each type of procurement process shall be used; the circumstances under which a tendering process is not required; the circumstances under which in-house bids will be encouraged as part of a tendering process; how the integrity of each procurement process will be maintained; how the interests of the municipality or local board, as the case may be, the public and persons participating in a procurement process will be protected; how and when the procurement processes will be reviewed to evaluate their effectiveness; and any other prescribed matter. Sample policies were developed by the Ontario Library Service and are posted in the Joint OLS-N/SOLS Clearinghouse of Professional Information.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Discussion: How does the budget process operate in your library?

Using this table, discuss how the budget process operates in your library.

Deadline	Activity	Action by
Monthly (Implementation)	Promote library to council and the community	Library board
Monthly (Implementation)	Monitor financial reports	Library board and CEO
6 months prior (Planning)	Review library goals and objectives	Library board and CEO
3 months prior (Planning)	Consider programs for the coming year in consultation with senior library staff	Chief Executive Officer
3 months prior (Planning)	Estimate potential revenue	Chief Executive Officer
3 months prior (Planning)	Review municipal budgeting guidelines and timetable for budget preparation	Chief Executive Officer
3 months prior (Preparation)	Recommend percentage adjustment in salaries	Personnel committee or appropriate library board representatives
2 months prior (Preparation)	Prepare the initial draft of the operating and capital budgets, present draft budget to Finance committee or appropriate representatives of the library board	Chief Executive Officer
1 – 2 months prior (Preparation)	Revise initial draft of the budget as necessary	Chief Executive Officer and Finance committee
1 month prior (Preparation)	Present draft budget to library board for approval	Finance committee Chairperson
	Approve budget for presentation to council	Library board
1 month prior (Preparation)	Discuss budget with municipal staff	Chief Executive Officer
1 month prior (Preparation)	Lobby individual council members regarding budget concerns	Individual library board members as assigned
2 – 3 weeks prior (Presentation)	Plan strategy for budget presentation	Library board Chief Executive Officer
2 weeks prior (Presentation)	Ensure all documentation to be used in budget presentation is in place	Library board Chief Executive Officer
Budget meeting with council (Presentation)	Present library budget	Library board

This model schedule is adapted from *Trustee 20/20 #2: The board and the budget: Presenting the budget to council*. The schedule originated in the *OLTA Supplement: The board's role in the budget process*, OLA, 1986.



### Key Relationships – The board, the CEO and municipal council

A summary of the roles of the board and the CEO was presented in Section 4 of this kit. The accountability aspects of the relationship between the library board and municipality were covered under the Financial Control section of this Kit. These relationships bear a second look, as it expands upon two guiding principles for delineating the roles of the board, the CEO and the municipal council, and helps to ensure the relationships are clearly delineated.

- Trustees see that libraries are properly run but do not run them.
- Trustees see that libraries are properly managed but do not manage them.

In this section of the *Kit*, we will look at the relationship between the board and CEO and then the board and municipal council.

#### The board and the CEO

The relationship between the board and the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) is a partnership. In an effective library organization, the board and the CEO work as a team to provide library service which meets the community's needs. Occasionally, this alliance is fraught with problems, frequently rooted in a basic misunderstanding of each other's roles.

Ontario library legislation demands accountability from library boards. At the same time, CEOs rightly see themselves in charge of the day-to-day operations. The surest way to avoid difficulties before they begin is to clearly delineate the roles that both the CEO and the board play in the overall operation of the library. Once these are understood, it is easier to respect each other's contributions and begin to work toward mutual goals.

In 1992, this topic was covered in an issue of *Trustee Tips* called "A library built on cooperation: the board's relationship with the CEO". From that time, the relationship between the library board and CEO remains similar.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The board and the CEO (continued)

### Key responsibility areas

In order to understand the board's role in relation to that of the CEO, it is helpful to consider the following chart reviewing the key areas of responsibility for each.

The **Board's key responsibility areas** are:

- Develop and approve policy and planning
- Advocate for the library
- Hire a CEO

While the board may devote a great deal of time and effort to the development of policies and plans for the library, it is ultimately the CEO who will have the responsibility for ensuring that those policies and plans are realized. Consequently, the board's single, most important task is to appoint a CEO. It is so important that the Ontario library legislation devotes a specific section 15 (2) to CEO appointment and a description of the CEO's duties.

CEO's key responsibility areas	
Advise the Board	Administer the library
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• make clear recommendations to board</li><li>• provide the board with all of the information it needs (both good and bad news)</li><li>• give advance warning of difficult situations whenever possible so that the board is never taken by surprise</li><li>• develop a close working relationship with the board chair</li><li>• support the board</li><li>• draft budget and official reports</li><li>• act as Secretary/Treasurer, if appointed such by the board (See section 15 (2-5) of the <b>Public Libraries Act</b>.)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• direct day-to-day operations of the library, including all branches</li><li>• ensure that all board policies and directives are carried out</li><li>• supervise the delivery of programs and services</li><li>• supervise and evaluate staff</li><li>• ensure that the budget is expended as approved by the board</li></ul>

The relationship between the board and the CEO should be one of mutual respect, trust, support and inspiration. The board hires and regularly evaluates the CEO's performance. The CEO, in turn, provides the expertise in library science to run the library.

# Library Board Development Kit

## The board and the CEO (continued)

To help explain the work of the library board and the CEO, we have included another chart which provides an overview of the work to be done and by whom. The chart is adapted from *The Ontario Library Trustees' Handbook*, Ontario Library Association, Toronto, 1999 and the Cut to the Chase document of the Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA).

### Overview of roles and responsibilities for board and CEO

	<i>Library board roles and responsibilities</i>	<i>CEO roles and responsibilities</i>
<b>Legal responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knows local and provincial laws; responds to new legislation affecting libraries.</li> <li>• Ensures that complete and accurate records are kept by the library.</li> <li>• Is legally responsible for the library to the council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Knows local and provincial laws; responds to new legislation affecting libraries.</li> <li>• Keeps complete and accurate records concerning financing, personnel, inventory, insurance and annual report.</li> <li>• Is legally responsible to the library board.</li> </ul>
<b>Board meetings</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attends and participates in all regular and special board meetings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reports at each board meeting and attends at all times except when <i>own performance or salary are to be discussed</i>.</li> </ul>
<b>Planning</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assesses the library needs of the community.</li> <li>• Sets the mission and overall direction of the library in response to the needs of the community</li> <li>• Approves and participates in the development of the library's goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Approves the plan for meeting the library's goals and objectives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assists the board to know community needs and to carry out formal assessment when required.</li> <li>• Analyzes library strengths and weaknesses.</li> <li>• Participates in developing the library's goals and objectives</li> <li>• Formulates a plan for meeting the library's goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Recommends programs and activities.</li> </ul>

# Library Board Development Kit

## The board and the CEO (continued)

### Overview of roles and responsibilities for board and CEO (continued)

	<i>Library board roles and responsibilities</i>	<i>CEO roles and responsibilities</i>
<b>Policy making</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determines policies for the library after careful analysis of the Chief Executive Officer's recommendations.</li> <li>• Evaluates the performance of the Library annually or more often, considering budget vis-à-vis service rendered, library use, personnel and public relations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommends policies needed, advises board, and supplies examples and sources of information.</li> <li>• Establishes procedures for implementing policies.</li> <li>• Interprets policies and procedures to staff and public.</li> <li>• Administers the Library to conform to established goals.</li> </ul>
<b>Personnel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hires the Chief Executive Officer.</li> <li>• May approve and review senior level staff recommended by Chief Executive Officer.</li> <li>• Approves salary scales for all staff.</li> <li>• Ensures that appropriate steps are taken to handle any grievances that have not been satisfactorily resolved.</li> <li>• Evaluates the CEO's performance annually.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hires and directs subordinate staff members, adhering to board policies.</li> <li>• Negotiates salary scales and working conditions for staff.</li> <li>• Handles all grievances and keeps the board informed.</li> <li>• Ensures that annual performance appraisals are conducted on all staff under the CEO's supervision</li> </ul>

# Library Board Development Kit

## The board and the CEO (continued)

### Overview of roles and responsibilities for board and CEO (continued)

	<i>Library board roles and responsibilities</i>	<i>CEO roles and responsibilities</i>
<b>Financial responsibilities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyzes preliminary budget request submitted by the Chief Executive Officer; makes necessary changes.</li> <li>• Explores all ways of increasing Library's income through new sources; determines method to be used.</li> <li>• Officially adopts budget and prepares the budget for presentation to municipal council.</li> <li>• Presents the budget at the municipal council and committee meetings. (This may vary with the size of the library and the level of integration with the municipality.)</li> <li>• Ensures that proper financial control measures are in place to expend the budget:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• with due diligence</li> <li>• according to board priorities</li> <li>• as approved by council</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prepares preliminary budget in conjunction with the Board or its committee based upon present and anticipated needs, considering the Board's plan for growth.</li> <li>• Liaises with municipal treasurer/CAO and other municipal staff regarding the budget.</li> <li>• Participates in budget presentation, supplying facts and figures, analysis and comment as requested.</li> <li>• Maintains and monitors the budget and attends to problem areas when they arise.</li> </ul>
<b>Community relations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Advocates the library's services in the community.</li> <li>• Advocates the community's needs with the library.</li> <li>• Develops a strong and communicative relationship with the municipal council.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Maintains an active program of public relations including promoting library services in the community.</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>Library boards see that libraries are properly run but do not run them.</i></b>  <b><i>Library boards see that libraries are well managed but do not manage them.</i></b></p>		

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The board and municipal council

The library board is often referred to as a bridge between the library and council. To build a strong relationship with council, the board must go beyond simple awareness of community needs. It is essential to this relationship that the board has its finger on the pulse of the community. This means proactive outreach to both the council and to the community, instead of reacting to crises as they arise. The board must ensure that council is aware of the library's potential and the impact the library can have on the community. There must be consistent and continual two-way communication.

Not unlike the relationship between the board and the CEO, the relationship with municipal or county council also depends upon accountability, cooperation, mutual understanding of roles, communication and knowledge of each other's needs and directions.

Because the board is accountable to council financially, the board needs to be well-prepared for their interactions with council. This means having good, clear back-up material when advocating to council for library funding. It also means approaching council at other times - when you are not asking for money or assistance. Build the relationship initially on sharing information as partners serving the same community.

Building a good relationship with council depends on open and frequent communication. It is important to foster cooperation, because both the board and council represent the same interests. Both bodies are responsible for meeting community needs. While the Board is an independent, separate body, it is important to look for ways to align agendas **instead of focusing on differences**. The board must be aware of council's plans and endeavour to demonstrate how the library fits within those plans. The library is an integral part of the community - it is the board's job to ensure council understands the library's part in it.

It is essential for library boards to forge a link with community leaders, including the Mayor, council members and other elected officials. The Chair should focus on developing a relationship with the Mayor or Reeve, while other board members target members of council and other elected officials, such as school board trustees. For county libraries, this will mean building relationships with lower tier officials, as well.

Knowing council's needs and directions and being well-prepared for meetings with council are obviously important. Developing a habit of meeting frequently with council, rather than approaching only when the library needs money, could help to take the board-council relationship to a more effective level. The fact that the library board and council represent the same interests and are both responsible to meet community needs is an important parallel to emphasize. Both parties must know and respect each other's roles. While the board is accountable to council financially, it is an independent, separate body. Working together to find ways for the library and the municipality to share approaches on an issue is far superior to only accentuating the distinctiveness of the two entities.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### The board and municipal council (continued)

#### Advocacy is critical to working with council

The board is responsible for ensuring that the community is aware of the importance and potential of the library, and that municipal council understands the importance of the library and its impact on the community. Advocacy is a major board responsibility. Advocacy may be described as verbal support or argument for a cause. It covers a broad range of activities. Whenever we recommend a certain brand of detergent or a headache remedy to a friend, we are acting as advocates for that product. Similarly, whenever the library board encourages support of the library's mission, values and beliefs, it is advocating the library. This differs from public relations or marketing because the focus is on the library, not on supporting a specific program or promoting a product.

Advocacy is a primary role for library board members because they have a statutory responsibility to govern the library and a moral responsibility to better service, cement relationships between the local community and library, and advance the library cause. To do this, they must know how the library works, what it offers, and truly represent library interests to legislators and funders. They must promote the library mission within the community, keep track of government legislation, communicate the implications of upcoming policy and legislation to government officials, and take part in clarifying and resolving library-related issues.

#### **Lobbying**

Lobbying is a specific type of advocacy which seeks to influence government bodies in their decision-making. Two varieties of lobbying are recognized: grass roots lobbying and direct lobbying.

**Grass Roots Lobbying** attempts to affect legislation by influencing the opinions of part or all of the general population. For example, an arts organization might launch a campaign urging the community to demand a review of a proposed by-law which would cut financial support to cultural organizations.

**Direct Lobbying** tries to influence legislation by direct contact with someone involved in preparing it.

The existence of public library legislation in Ontario is an indication that library service is already considered by the lawmakers to be very important. It may be necessary to make a stronger case at the municipal level. "Quality of life" facilities, such as libraries, in a community are assuming increased importance and the competition for funds is becoming tougher each year. The board may need to sharpen its advocacy skills just to stay in the running for dollars.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The board and municipal council (continued)

### When Should Trustees Advocate?

Whenever the library is talked about, attention is drawn to it. Tell friends about your work as trustee and encourage them to use the library. Use your enthusiasm to promote the library and communicate library needs clearly and strongly to selected targets. Use your influence on council well and utilize your council reps to help present issues to council. Success in advocacy depends on accurate effective messages reaching the right targets.

### Library Advocacy Now!

This is a program developed by the Canadian Library Association and a team of trustees, vendors and librarians to train more effective spokespersons and advocates for all types of libraries. Further information on the program is posted on the web at [www.cla.ca](http://www.cla.ca).

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## Group dynamics and board communications

### The importance of communication in relationships

Earlier sections of the *Kit* touched on some key components of communication within the board, and this is very important when the board considers its key relationships with the Library CEO and with the municipal/county council and staff. For example, there was a discussion on using a “Code of Conduct” as a method of setting ground rules for how a board might interact and a discussion about the concept of “speaking with one voice” and the importance of a decision-making process to assist the board in making objective decisions.

It is also important to consider that basic communication skills are pre-requisite to any effective relationship. Board members need to know how to talk and discuss issues with each other, the CEO and staff, the council and the community. Boards must know how to create a clear message and distribute it so that it can be understood.

### Plan how to communicate important information

When boards make decisions and have information to share, it is important to handle communications in a logical and efficient manner, taking care to ensure the message is clear, that it is sent or delivered to the right target, that the most effective format or formats is/are chosen and that the message is delivered in a timely fashion.



# Library Board Development Kit

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## Group dynamics and board communications (continued)

### Some key communication skills

- **Foster dialogue instead of debate**

Discussing issues and trying to reach decisions can be very difficult at times. It is important to recognize that there must be differences of opinion in order to reach decisions. The board must be able to make decisions from a divergent base and seek out and listen to many viewpoints so that the final choice satisfactorily solves the problem, or handles it in a way that appeals to the greatest number of voices.

It helps to consider the differences between dialogue and debate. Debate tends to focus on one “right” resolution, and often fails to lead to a conclusion supported by the majority. Debate is often adversarial. One participant pits himself against another, attempting to find flaws in the opponent’s position and focusing on defending his own assumptions as the truth. Debate tends to criticize the adversary’s position and force others to accept one’s own position.

Dialogue, on the other hand, is more geared to building a solution. Dialogue recognizes that all participants can have a piece of the truth. There is an attempt to work together to explore commonalities and gain mutual understanding. Participants are more prone to listen to find points of agreement, and assumptions are discussed and evaluated. Dialogue seeks a new and better answer to a problem.

- **Practice effective listening**

We can listen to others in a variety of ways. We can listen with the intent of finding fault with what the other person is saying. We can listen in an interested but passive way, assuming that we have understood what we have heard correctly.

“I know that you believe you understand what you think I said, but I am not sure you realize that what you heard is not what I meant.”

Finally, we can listen “effectively.” This type of listening is engaging. We listen to understand not only what the other person is saying, but also what he is thinking, feeling or wanting. In essence, this type of listening moves us to find out what the message really means, by attempting to check out or verify what is being said in some way before responding. This type of listening is more active. While we may still not agree with what has been said, we can understand the person’s point of view.

Effective listening engenders better communication by allowing others to be heard and acknowledged. It may help others to spot weaknesses in their own arguments when they are heard without criticism. It can also help to point out areas of agreement or bring more hidden issues to the surface to be dealt with openly.

# Library Board Development Kit

## Discussion: Building a relationship with municipal council

Answer the questions in the left-hand column to help you strengthen your board's relationship with municipal council.

<i>Questions about your relationship with council</i>	<i>Comments/Action</i>
What materials will you need to prepare or acquire prior to meetings with council?	
How can you make a clear case to council on future library development?	
How will council members on the board be used to further the relationship with council?	
How will you involve council in library activities, events and celebrations?	
How can you become aware of council's needs and agenda?	
What actions can you take to keep council informed and, hopefully, on side?	
What obvious opportunities for cooperation are there with council?	
How will you prepare for the annual budget presentation to council?	

<i>At the end of the first year of the term, try completing this section of the chart. Re-visit the chart regularly to determine if your relationship with council is getting stronger.</i>		
Describe the board's current relationship with council  ➤ Does the board meet with council regularly or only at budget time?  ➤ Does the board remain abreast of council concerns and issues?  ➤ Is council aware of library board issues?	Strengths	Weaknesses
	Opportunities	Challenges

## Planning

The board has a duty to determine how the library will progress, and the rate of that progress in order to achieve the mission. Priorities for service need to be determined, as well as appropriate standards and measures to ensure ongoing monitoring and evaluation of service to the community. This is part of planning.

Planning is essential to focused and effective library service. It is the collective work of engaging in big picture thinking that clarifies the library's purpose and future direction and ties day-to-day practicalities to the big picture. Planning is a process of investigation, decision-making, implementation, and evaluation, all designed to place the library in the forefront of community service.

### What is planning?

The public library is one of the most important services in a community. It provides cultural, recreational, informational and educational services to all members of the community. Planning is the process by which a library ensures that it is serving the community and responding to its needs. It moves the library from a reactive stance to an active one, determining and shaping its own future.

Planning answers the following questions:

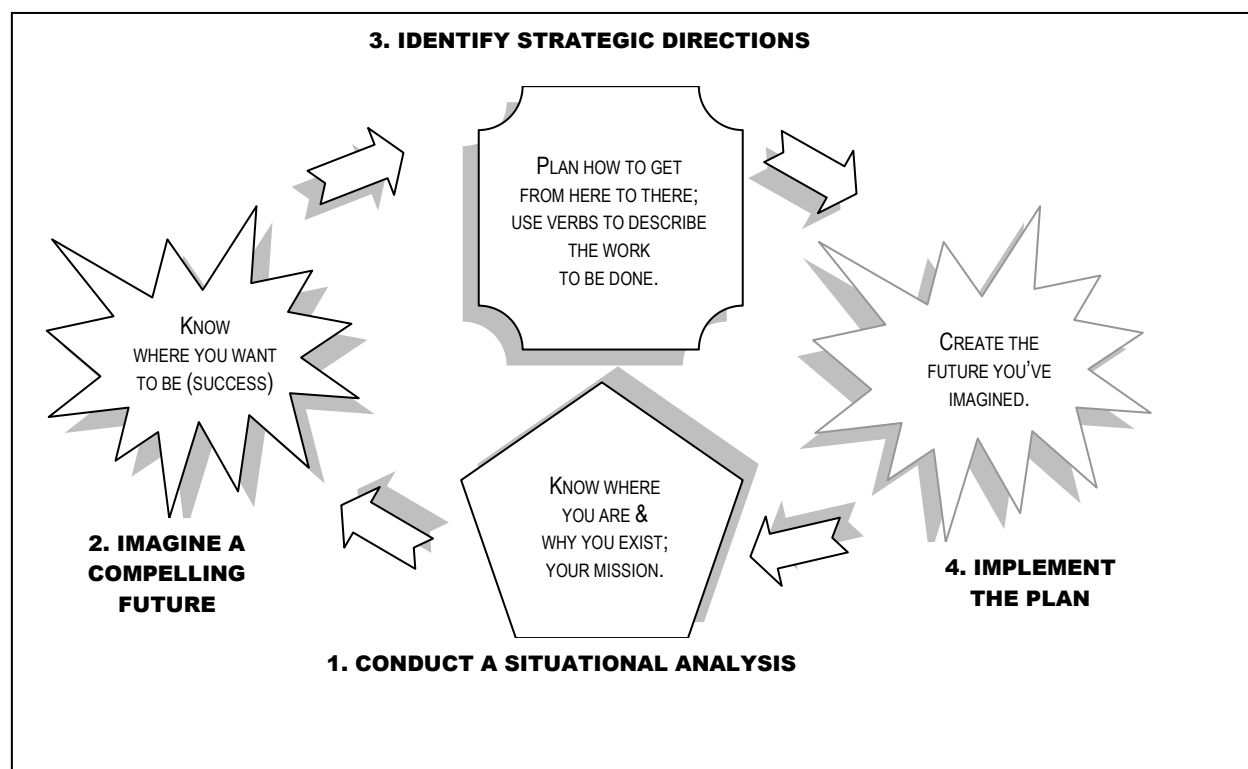
- What is the purpose of the library?
- What is the library environment (or community)?
- What are the needs of the community?
- What roles should the library play?
- How do we assess progress?

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The planning process

In 2007, SOLS set out a process for planning process in a publication called *Creating the Future You've Imagined: A Guide to Essential Planning*. It is a framework that provides for the alignment between fundamental decisions about identity and direction, and everyday decisions affecting service and or the use of resources. The diagram sets out the stages in the essential planning process.



## The board's role in the planning process

Because the board is accountable for the affairs of the library, and is the bridge between the library and the community, the board is involved in the planning process. The board's role, first and foremost, is to ensure that planning takes place.

In the planning world, terms such as strategic plan, annual plans, are often used to describe the planning document. For a library, a strategic plan is generally described as a systematic process by which the library formulates achievable objectives or goals for future growth and development over a period of years, based on its mission and on an assessment of the resources (both human and material) which are available to implement the plan. A well-developed *strategic plan* can serve as the foundation for effective performance evaluation of the CEO. A strategic plan, covering several years, can provide the basis of an annual plan.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The board's role in the planning process (continued)

### Planning is an important board role because it:

- ensures that the board, staff and community understand why the library is there and what it is trying to achieve.
- investigates the needs of the community and ensures that the library responds to those needs without unnecessary duplication of services available elsewhere in the community.
- ensures continuity of services, regardless of changes in personnel, be it among board, staff or council members.
- encourages long term commitment to library services among key decision-makers in the community.
- aligns the resources of the library with stated priorities
- ensures the library's ability to respond to changing needs and trends in the community.
- affirms to council that library funds are being spent in a deliberate and responsible manner.

The board engages in big picture thinking in order to come to a shared understanding of the purpose of the library. This it articulates in a mission statement. The board also has the responsibility to set the future direction for the library. This work is accomplished through the development of a vision which describes what the successful library will be in the future. Setting the goals and objectives of library service in the community follows the visioning process. Establishing priorities among the identified goals and objectives is part of the board role, since the board is responsible for ensuring that funding is adequate to achieve the stated goals and objectives.

Although it is unlikely that the board would be involved in all the stages of the planning process, unless the library is a small one, there are points in the process where board involvement is necessary:

- mission and vision statement
- selecting the service priorities
- overall goals and objectives
- setting and approving the policies required to support the plan
- identifying the indicators to be used to evaluate if goals and objectives are met
- monitoring progress and reporting on it to the community

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The Importance of strategic thinking

The board's task is to steer – not to row. When volunteers come to a library board, they come with many skills. It is particularly important that board members are able to consider the big picture and think strategically.

Strategic thinking is a manner of thinking that seeks to relentlessly move the library forward to meet emerging needs in the community, while constantly confirming that the activity of the library remains consistent with its purpose. Key aspects of this type of thinking are ongoing assessment of environmental factors, risks and opportunities, coupled with continuous questioning that the work of the library matters and reflects its mission, vision and values. To think in this manner, the board must also have a solid connection with the community and bring diverse voices to the board table.

So it is the board's thinking, combined with the library-specific expertise of the CEO and staff that is so significant. The board must have the capacity to govern the board from a strategic perspective all the time.

## Selected planning tools

**Creating the Future You've Imagined: A Guide to Essential Planning. Library Development Guide # 3.** Southern Ontario Library Service. 2007.

This publication outlines SOLS' approach to the planning process, an approach that highlights the need for board and staff to enter into strategic conversation as the best way to arrive at a collective understanding of the library's essence, where it is right now, where it should be, and what it needs to do to get from here to there. Essential Planning is a scale-able planning approach that can be made appropriate for the small town library, the county library with geographically dispersed rural branches, and the thriving urban library system. It recognizes that planning is an essential board and staff responsibility, but also recognizes that it represents work that is in addition to the ongoing governance and operational work required for the provision of library service. The Essential Planning approach was designed to be a manageable, plausible undertaking so that all boards and staff will choose to engage in the essential work of planning for library service.

One copy of this Guide was distributed to every public library in Ontario at no cost. To purchase copies use the online order form at <http://www.sols.org/publications/orderform.aspx>

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Selected planning tools (continued)

### ***Ontario Public Library Guidelines***

The ***Ontario Public Library Guidelines*** program was developed by the Ontario public library community to help improve the quality of public library service across the province. The *OPL Guidelines* offer a method for public libraries to comprehensively assess governance, management, resources and services. Generally, the guidelines set requirements for a library to have basic policies in place, to evaluate services and needs and develop plans for service development. There is less of an emphasis on quantitative measures of service. With the assessment completed libraries can develop work plans to address those areas where they fail to meet basic levels.

Participation in the *OPL Guidelines* program is voluntary. The *OPL Guidelines* are useful at several levels, and depending on its state of preparedness, the library may wish to involve itself in an internal assessment or a formal audit in order to receive accreditation status from the Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council. The purpose of the Guidelines Council is threefold:

1. To monitor the continuing effectiveness of the *OPL Guidelines* and make revisions as required;
2. To arrange for peer audits of those public libraries which so request;
3. To bestow the special designation of “Accredited Ontario Public Library” on those public libraries that successfully complete the *OPL Guidelines* process.

To maximize public library ownership and to maintain a high degree of objectivity, the Council is made up of members appointed by a broad range of public library-related organizations.

Depending upon location, staff from OLS-North or SOLS can help with the initial work on the *OPL Guidelines*. They will meet to fully explain the program and to do a preliminary review of programs, services and governance. They will help put together a plan for meeting the requirements and assist with development of policies and processes required under the *OPL Guidelines*.

The accreditation component of the *OPL Guidelines* is a way for the library community to recognize the achievements of its peers and colleagues. A library interested in participating in the accreditation process should notify the Guidelines Council. The Council will make arrangements for a peer audit team to be formed. The audit team will contact the library to arrange an appropriate date and time to meet. The library will be invoiced for a pre-set audit fee to cover the cost of materials and auditors’ expenses.

Accredited libraries receive a certificate. The certificate will be valid for five years. In addition, the library will receive a recognition package, including plaque, press release, accreditation logo clip art and other items to help advertise its accredited status.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Selected planning tools (continued)

### *Ontario Public Library Guidelines* (continued)

Why is accreditation good for your library? There are several points to consider.

1. **Evaluation of local service** - The guidelines facilitate an organized, objective approach to the evaluation of local library service. They ensure that your evaluation process is fair and comprehensive. Rather than concentrating unduly on strengths or weaknesses, the guidelines give direction to, and assistance with, a review of the whole spectrum of services and operations.
2. **Planning** - By using the guidelines, you will gain an understanding of those matters which require attention, and those which can be considered to be appropriately developed. With this assessment in place, you are able to consider appropriate directions for development of library services, and incorporate them into your annual plan.
3. **Accountability to taxpayers** - Accreditation indicates to taxpayers that their library is meeting province wide standards and using public money effectively and responsibly. There are demonstrable performance measures to indicate the value and quality of library service in the community.
4. **Funding** - The guidelines, and the plans developed as a result of their application, will assist your board by providing the justification for securing municipal and other funding to implement the plans. Accreditation will help to make the case for adequate local support by showing that the library is a good place for the municipality to put its money.
5. **Consistent service across the province** - A library which undertakes accreditation will play a leadership role in raising the level of public library service across the province. When you implement the guidelines, you encourage neighbouring libraries to do the same, and everyone benefits from the enhanced service.

To find out more about the *Guidelines* program, about using the *Guidelines* in your library, about public library accreditation, or about putting your name forward as an auditor, please contact a member of the OPL Guidelines Council. The staff representative on the Council from OLS-North is Steven Kraus who can be reached at [skraus@olsn.ca](mailto:skraus@olsn.ca) or 1-800-461-6348 ext 228, and from SOLS, the staff representative is Peggy Malcolm ( [pmalcolm@sols.org](mailto:pmalcolm@sols.org) or 1-866-380-9767). They can provide more information on the specifics of the program.

The **Ontario Public Library Guidelines** continue to be a useful tool for any public library. The administration of program has moved from Ontario Library Service-North to the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, and in late 2010, the fifth edition of the *Ontario Public Library Guidelines* was posted on the website of the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries at <http://www.fopl.ca/OntarioPublicLibrariesMonitoringandAccreditationCouncil/> .



# Library Board Development Kit

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## Selected planning tools (continued)

### **The Library's Contribution to Your Community: A resource manual for libraries to document their social and economic contribution to the local community**

Public libraries have long been aware of the positive contribution they make to the life of the community, but have had difficulty in demonstrating it persuasively to municipal politicians and administrators. This manual was produced to assist in documenting the benefits of the public library in ways which speak directly to municipal stakeholders. Approximately 20 municipal politicians and administrators were polled by the consultants who produced the manual, and they indicated that they needed to see organized evidence of clearly identified benefits in the local context.

The manual is designed for self-use by public libraries. Individuals can choose how to use the manual at a level of involvement comfortable for their library. It identifies thirteen social and nine economic benefits which a public library may provide, and indicates how to collect and analyze evidence that the library delivers these benefits to the community.

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Benefit measures</b>
Social/ Personal	Personal growth/ Development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information services for personal decisions</li> <li>• Lifelong learning</li> <li>• Search for employment</li> <li>• Use of leisure time</li> <li>• Reading readiness for pre-school children</li> <li>• Multicultural services</li> </ul>
	Community development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social interaction/Sense of community</li> <li>• Satisfaction with the community as a place to live</li> <li>• Community awareness</li> </ul>
	Support to community groups/agencies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information services</li> <li>• Other services</li> <li>• Support for Individuals in the education system</li> </ul>
Economic	Direct economic impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employment</li> <li>• Purchase of goods and services</li> </ul>
	Support to local business/ Investors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information services to local business</li> <li>• Information services to personal investors</li> <li>• New business development</li> </ul>
	Indirect Economic Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Industrial/Commercial attraction</li> <li>• Support for the retail sector</li> <li>• Enhanced property value</li> <li>• Marketing and promotional information in support of local business</li> </ul>

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Selected planning tools (continued)

### **The Library's Contribution to Your Community: A resource manual for libraries to document their social and economic contribution to the local community**

The manual provides tools for collecting the information needed, including five different surveys. Included in the manual is a communication strategy that includes constructing the argument and preparing for counter-arguments, and a means to deliver your message to municipal politicians and administrators.

Copies of the manual are available in English and in French. One copy of the manual was distributed to each public library in Ontario, and training and assistance in its use is available from Southern Ontario Library Service. Copies can be ordered online at <http://www.sols.org/publications/lctyc/index.htm>

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### **Discussion questions: Planning**

With respect to planning, consider these two questions

1. Review your library's current planning process. Do the goals, objectives and activities or actions in the planning document clearly relate to the library's vision, mission and values?
  
2. How does your library board handle planning? Is planning done on an annual basis or is there a three- or five-year planning process? Does the board discuss factors and issues that might have an impact in the future on a regular basis?

## Policy

*Keeping in mind that the board is a permanent entity, one that continues to exist as a unit after individual board members have left or CEOs have come and gone, the crucial role of the board is providing continuity of governance for the library and ensuring consistent library service in the community over time. Policy is the board's most important task. Policies should be in written form, approved at a formal board meeting and reviewed and revised, if necessary, at regular intervals.*

Policy is an important governance tool used by the board to engage in the roles of:

- Defining the library's purpose and direction
- Delegation of authority to the staff to operate the library and deliver services
- Advocating for library service

Policies are the framework which assists the library board in conducting its business and the library staff in making day-to-day decisions. They grow out of and give definition to the library's mission in the community, and provide for the establishment of consistent operational procedures. The public library board uses policy to set out what needs to be done, determine who will do it, and how it is to be done. It is a key ingredient to the successful operation of the library.

Policy arises out of the collective values and beliefs of the board, staff, and community about library service. Policy provides a structure, circumscribing the range of the library's activities that will accomplish the library's priorities. In addition, policies provide the structure for how the board itself functions.

### **The board's role in developing policy**

Policy development is the responsibility of the library board. This work is accomplished by the board creating an annual work plan that sets out the schedule of policies that will be reviewed.

Since the board represents the community, the board defines the values and beliefs that underlie the policy. In other words, the board's contribution to drafting policy is at the broadest level, setting out the guiding principles to which all further policies must adhere. Policies must be approved at a duly called and constituted board meeting. The board as a whole is the only body authorized to approve policies on behalf of the library.

## Library Board Development Kit

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### **The board's role in developing policy** (continued)

An essential element of these policies is that they *communicate the values and principles on which they are based*, as well as any specific provisions. This is needed so that the board and staff of the library understand the motivation of the policy and can act accordingly in determining implementation methods. It also focuses Board discussion on an area where trustees, as representatives of the community, have special competence. An example of such a principle-based policy is the one setting the target value for the extra non-resident fee paid by people from outside the municipality as being equal to the average taxes collected per household for library service.

### **The staff role in developing policy**

It will most likely be the CEO who identifies the need to develop new policies related to library operations. The CEO provides information and frequently drafts an initial version of policies. Other staff may have a role in writing policy. In fact, the writing of policy is a collaborative effort by both board and staff, with each partner offering his or her particular experience and/or expertise. The board needs to rely on the input of staff in order to further develop policy because the staff has training and expertise in the library field. In most situations, the CEO prepares a draft of policy upon which the board would deliberate, but approval is clearly the board's job.

Further work on procedures that flow from these guiding principles are usually left to the staff to complete, since they are involved in the day-to-day operations of the library. Although written policies often require a lot of time to formulate, establish, implement and evaluate, the advantages far outweigh the effort spent in developing them. In the long run, they save time.

### **Written vs. unwritten policy**

Policy must be written in order to be an effective tool. An 'unwritten policy' would be of little use in the case of a challenge to an item in the library's collection. A board may be able to retrieve a motion from the minutes of a meeting held several years ago, or recall a precedent from a situation in the past, that might guide it in making a particular decision, but it is hardly an efficient way to govern.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Written vs. unwritten policy (continued)

Written policies are the greatest contribution the board makes towards continuity because they:

- ensure that the board clearly expresses its beliefs about library service in the community
- ensure that the board makes decisions objectively and not reactively
- provide assurance that decisions are not made on personal grounds
- provide information to the community about the library
- ensure consistency in making decisions
- reduce the number of decisions that must be made independently, thereby saving time and money
- define roles and responsibilities for decision-making
- control activities so that the board is confident that its wishes are being carried out
- provide a measure of legal protection
- gives clear direction to staff

## The policy manual

Writing policy requires a significant investment of time by the board. Once developed and approved, policies should be available for reference by the board, staff and the public. Policies should be stored in a designated policy binder or manual. In addition to the actual library policies, the policy manual should also contain:

- **Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44** and Regulation 976
- Municipal or county by-laws affecting the library, including the by-law which established library service
- library plan (mission statement, goals and objectives, etc.)

Using this type of policy binder facilitates regular review and revision of policies by allowing the addition of both new and/or revised policy statements to replace outdated versions. All board members should have a copy of the policy manual, copies should be available to the public, and posted on the library's website.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The policy manual (continued)

In the policy manual, each policy should be recorded on a separate page, and should include the following information, as shown in the sample on the next few pages:

- Policy category and number
- Title (Subject) of the policy
- Date of final approval by the board
- Approximate date for review of the policy
- Statement on values and principles
- Reference to other policies which relate to the issue or legislation

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## Trillium Public Library



Policy Type: **Governance**

Policy Number: **GOV- 05**

Policy Title: **Policy Development**

Policy Approval Date:

Policy Review Date:

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In accordance with the **Public Libraries Act**, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44, s. 3(3), the Trillium Public Library is under the management and control of the board. The board has the sole authority and responsibility for establishing policy. This policy directs the board to develop and monitor policies.

Policies set the framework for the governance and operations of the library and provide direction to board and staff. The policies are the tool for achieving the library's purpose and advancing the mission. Board members and staff are responsible for knowing, understanding and complying with the policies of the Trillium Public Library.

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# Library Board Development Kit

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## Policy Development (continued)

### Trillium Public Library – Governance - Policy Development (continued)

#### Section 1: Types of Policies

The board develops and maintains policies in four areas:

- a) Foundation policies which record the board's decisions on vision, mission, and values
- b) Board bylaws which establish the organizational structure of the board and how it does business
- c) Governance policies which define the responsibilities and regulate the work of the board
- d) Operational policies which regulate the services and day-to-day operations of the library

#### Section 2: Responsibilities

1. The board will:
  - a) establish a schedule to review existing policies and will integrate this schedule into the board agendas
  - b) ensure that policies comply with the **Public Libraries Act**, any applicable municipal bylaws provincial and federal legislation

#### Section 3: Policy Approval

1. The board will:
  - a) receive all policy changes, in draft, seven days prior to the next scheduled board meeting
  - b) introduce a new policy or policy change through a motion at a duly constituted board meeting
  - c) approve all policies at a duly constituted board meeting

#### Section 4: Policy Distribution

1. All policies should be documented in a standard format; numbered according to policy type and include the date of approval and the date of the next review.
2. The board will:
  - a) include approved policies in the **Trillium Public Library Policy Manual**
  - b) ensure that all board members and staff have access to the policy manual
  - c) post policies on the library's website

#### Section 5: Considerations

1. The development of a new policy or the revision of an existing policy can come from several sources:
  - a) the Chief Executive Officer
  - b) a member of the board
  - c) the council
  - d) provincial government
  - e) a member of the public

**Related Documents: *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O.1990, c. P44**

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### Three steps to developing policy

How does a board create policy? The process of writing policy can be daunting, but there is a systematic approach to the task, consisting of three steps. The first step is the philosophical discussion phase in which the board grapples with the various points of views on the issue under consideration. Because the board represents the community, it must allow enough time for open discussion, listen to all sides of the issues, debate, identify the board's collective belief, as well as the desired outcome of the policy. In this step, the board will define the basic principles of the policy and the desired result of the policy. For example, as a basis for a discussion on Internet access policy, the board would consider its commitment to the principle of Intellectual freedom, upon which public libraries are built, and debate the many points of view that individual board members bring to the discussion. From this discussion, the board clarifies the belief that will underlie the policy. The initial statement in a policy often makes reference to this belief.

The next step is more straightforward. It includes the rules or policy statements arising from the board's beliefs and values that indicate what should be done about the issue. To which situations will the policy apply? What are the broad parameters for action? What impact will the policy have on existing policies? What are the potential legal and political implications of the proposed policy? By considering these questions, the board can define the regulations that would be required to achieve that purpose. The board should also be mindful that the policy as drafted supports the mission and priorities of the library.

The third step involves setting out the specific actions to deal with the issue. What will have to be done to enforce the regulations or guidelines set down by the board? Calling to mind possible reactions to the policy might spark ideas about potential difficulties in implementing the policy. The costs of implementing the policy will also have to be considered during the development of the policy specifics. What effect will implementing the policy have on human, financial, and physical resources?

### Decision-making: A key skill in developing policy

Public library boards represent a diverse group of people, the entire community in fact. How can a board make decisions, when opinion in the community is likely to vary widely? Boards have to be able to deal with the tough issues, and to develop the skills to reach policy decisions and speak with one voice.

The true strength of a board comes from its ability to make decisions from a very diverse base. It's critical for boards to think about how to make decisions and how to handle disagreement. In order to make decisions that are in the best interests of the library, the board must seek out and listen to many viewpoints, so that the final choice satisfactorily solves the problem or handles the issue in way that appeals to greatest number of voices.



## Library Board Development Kit

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### Decision-making: A key skill in developing policy (continued)

The board must be cognizant of the issue in question, and also have a sound course of action in place to handle the discussion and reach a suitable conclusion. Boards must learn how to come to grips with disagreement in the boardroom, as it is an essential component of healthy debate. But how does a board find such a process?

One approach to developing a decision-making process is to break down decision-making into a series of steps<sup>1</sup>. Such steps can help boards debate an issue in a calm and logical manner and make informed decisions, by clearly defining the decision to be made, gathering information to help to understand the problem, identifying and consulting with key stakeholders to understand the effect of a decision upon them, and proposing alternatives to be considered. In considering the alternatives, it is important to bear in mind both the immediate impact and consequences of each alternative, and the impact and consequences over time.

The process then involves applying “criteria for decision-making.”<sup>2</sup> These criteria attempt to bring the board’s current values, policies and beliefs to bear upon the decision in a logical way. For example, which option would provide the most possible benefit for the most people within available resources? How does each option align with current policies, laws and principles of library service? What are the relative costs of each option, including the opportunity cost?

This type of process can help a board to make a sound decision, deal with inevitable disagreement and keep as many parties satisfied as possible. There’s one more hurdle though.



#### **Speaking with one voice**

Speaking with one voice is a concept that is easy to imagine but much harder to achieve. Good governance does imply that all board members must agree on all issues. Far from it – healthy debate is needed for boards to make informed decisions. But good governance does necessitate that all members agree that any decision that is made using a fair process **IS** the position of the board.

How many times have you heard a board member, after spending a great deal of time debating an issue and agreeing to a decision, state, in public, that he couldn’t agree with the decision and didn’t vote for it. We cannot realistically expect someone who was strongly opposed to a position to suddenly agree with it if the vote goes contrary to his position. Those on both sides of the debate need to understand that, with a fair process, all board members must support the validity of the decision, and the integrity of the process. Everyone may not agree with the decision, but if the decision results from a fair process, a process agreed upon by the board, then all members must respect the position that the board has taken.

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<sup>1</sup> Such a process is described in *The policy governance fieldbook: Practical lessons, tips, and tools from the experiences of real-world boards*, Caroline Oliver, general editor, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999, pp 124-5.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p. 124.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Eliciting input on your policy

It is useful to seek input from those who will be affected by the policy to test its soundness prior to formal adoption. For example, the board might wish to test how a potentially controversial policy might be received by staff and patrons. How will this input be sought? Will special interest groups also be contacted?

## Review policies regularly and revise them as necessary

Once the board has invested the time to develop policy, it is important to conduct regular policy reviews. One need only think of the rapid expansion of information technology to realize that the policies governing access to materials that were appropriate a few years ago may be inadequate today.

What should the board consider when conducting a review of policies? The key is to determine whether or not the policy has been useful for the purpose it was intended to serve. The board should explore whether the policy has been effective in the situations for which it was developed. Reports from staff and reactions from the public will indicate the level of effectiveness. Specific challenges against the policy will suggest whether the policy is perceived as being too severe or too lenient. It will also be important to consider how the environment in which the policy was originally created has changed, and what alterations should be made to the policy in light of such change. In certain cases, few if any, changes may be necessary. In others, a major policy revision may be required.

**The board's role in the operational (financial, personnel and programming) matters of the library lies in developing appropriate policies to ensure that all activities conform to the mission of the library and are in accordance with the requirements of the *Public Libraries Act*.**

### Some characteristics of good policy

- Integrated with library mission
- Statement of beliefs on an issue
- Clear basis for action
- Allows interpretation and adjustment to change
- Gives initial basis for evaluation

### Policy vs. Procedure

Policies and procedures are not the same thing. Implementation of policies requires clearly written procedures. Procedures are detailed and specific instructions concerning particular operations. While policies determine the 'what' of library operations, procedures determine the 'how'. Boards make policies and library staff establish procedures to implement these policies.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Types of Policy

There are various approaches and terms used to categorize the different types of policies that a library needs to have in place. Four interwoven types of documents are presented here.

**Foundation policies** or statements articulate the library's purpose. The foundation policies set the context for library decisions and articulate the board's vision, mission and values. These guiding principles are not always written in policy format.

**Bylaws** are the rules and regulations that govern the operations of the board. Almost all bylaws have their basis in the *Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44* and should be developed with reference to the *Act*. The *Public Libraries Act* provides the basis of bylaws of the library board by specifying:

- Name of the board (Section 3)
- Powers and Duties of the Board (Section 20)
- Composition of the board (Section 9 to 13)
- Officers and staff (Section 14 & 15)
- Meetings (Section 16)
- Authority

**Governance Policies** regulate the business of the board. They focus on how the board defines its roles and responsibilities. They are not as closely derived from the *Act* as are bylaws. The board should have governance policies that provide direction and elaborate on:

- Purpose of the board
- Board Orientation
- Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members
- Committees
- Policy Development
- Planning
- Financial Oversight
- Advocacy
- Evaluation of the CEO
- Board Training
- Board Evaluation
- Succession Planning
- Delegation of Authority to the CEO

**Operational Policies** outline the means to achieve the board's mission and goals. They direct the actions of the CEO and staff. They are in place to ensure excellence in work performance, appropriate behavior, service development and attention to risks. Section 23(4) of the *Public Libraries Act* gives the board the authority to make policy on the use of library services, admission to the library, exclusion of disruptive persons, imposing fines, suspension of library privileges for breaches of rules, regulation of all other matters connected with the management of the library and library property. Note that the wording of the Act is "may" which means that the board may make policies if it wishes. Thorough board's policies should address all aspects of library services and programs.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Types of Policy (continued)

Sample governance and operational policies have been published by the Southern Ontario Library Service in a publication called *Trillium Public Library: Sample Policies* which is posted on the SOLS website in the publications section as well as through the Joint OLS-N/SOLS Clearinghouse of Professional Information. The web address is <http://www.sols.org/publications/guides/trilliumpolicies/tofc.htm>. Here is the current list of sample policies:

### Foundation Policies

- [Mission Statement](#) - Policy Number: FN-01
- [Vision Statement](#) - Policy Number: FN-02
- [Statement of Values](#) - Policy Number: FN-03
- [Intellectual Freedom](#) - Policy Number: FN-04

### Bylaws

- [Statement of Authority](#) - Policy Number: BL-01
- [Composition of the Board](#) - Policy Number: BL-02
- [Terms of Reference of the Officers](#) - Policy Number: BL-03
- [Powers and Duties of the Board](#) - Policy Number: BL-04
- [Meetings of the Board](#) - Policy Number: BL-05
- [Amendment of Bylaws](#) - Policy Number: BL-06

### Governance Policies

- [Purpose of the Board](#) - Policy Number: GOV-01
- [Board Orientation](#) - Policy Number: GOV-02
- [Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members](#) - Policy Number: GOV-03
- [Committee of the Board](#) - Policy Number: GOV-04
- [Policy Development](#) - Policy Number: GOV-05
- [Planning](#) - Policy Number: GOV-06
- [Financial Control / Oversight](#) - Policy Number: GOV-07
- [Board Advocacy](#) - Policy Number: GOV-08
- [Evaluation of the Chief Executive Officer](#) - Policy Number: GOV-09
- [Board Training](#) - Policy Number: GOV-10
- [Board Evaluation](#) - Policy Number: GOV-11
- [Succession Planning](#) - Policy Number: GOV-12
- [Delegation of Authority to the CEO](#) - Policy Number: GOV-13

### Human Resources

- [Human Rights - Discrimination and Violence](#) (draft)
- [Prevention of Workplace Violence](#) (draft)

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Types of Policy (continued)

### Operational Policies

[Confidentiality & the Protection of Privacy](#) - Policy Number: OP-01

[Safety, Security and Emergency](#) - Policy Number: OP-2

[Accessible Customer Service](#) - Policy Number: OP-03

[Collection Development](#) Policy Number: OP-04

[Resource Sharing](#) - Policy Number: OP-05

[Programming Policy](#) - Policy Number: OP-06

[Internet Services Policy](#) - Policy Number: OP-07

[Meeting Rooms](#) - Policy Number: OP-08

[Community Information](#) - Policy Number: OP-09

[Children and Teens Services](#) - Policy Number: OP-10

[Unattended Children](#) - Policy Number: OP-11

[Circulation](#) - Policy Number: OP-12

[Local History](#) - Policy Number: OP-13

[Information Services](#) - Policy Number: OP-14

### Volunteer Policies

[Volunteer Program](#) - Policy Number: VOL-01

[Recruitment and Assignment](#) - Policy Number: VOL-02

[Responsibilities of Volunteers Policy](#) - Policy Number: VOL-03

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## Discussion: Policy checklist

The **Ontario Public Library Guidelines** set out the best practice for governance, management and development of public libraries in Ontario. They are developed, monitored and revised by the Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council, a broadly-based group, representative of the Ontario public library community. The Guidelines provide a voluntary process designed to assess the state of operations and development of a public library and enable it to attain and maintain consistently strong levels of service. The guidelines may be used either for internal purposes as a board and CEO evaluation tool or in a purposeful process to achieve accreditation through a formal audit.

In the 4<sup>th</sup> edition of the **Guidelines** there are 141 statements. These include statements about planning document, evaluation processes and policies.

This table provides a list of policies that appear in the Guideline statements. A library cannot be accredited under the **Ontario Public Library Guidelines** if it fails to have any one of the mandatory guidelines marked with a ✱. Board should begin a review of policies by taking an inventory of their by-laws and governance policies. The table can be used as a checklist.

# Library Board Development Kit

## Discussion: Policy checklist (continued)

Policies in the Ontario Public Library Guidelines 4 <sup>th</sup> Edition	Policy Status	
	Have	Don't Have
1.1.7 - Board Bylaws ❁		
<i>Includes:</i>		
<i>Governing Body (appointments to the Board)</i>		
<i>Officers &amp; Committees</i>		
<i>Meetings</i>		
<i>Board Finances</i>		
<i>Amendment of Bylaws</i>		
<i>Duties and Responsibilities of the board</i>		
1.3.1 - Planning Policy ❁		
1.5.1 - Advocacy Policy ❁		
3.1.1 - Personnel Policy ❁		
<i>Includes:</i>		
<i>Responsibility for Personnel Issues</i>		
<i>The hiring process</i>		
<i>Hours of Work</i>		
<i>Salaries</i>		
<i>Wages and Benefits</i>		
<i>Holidays</i>		
<i>Vacations and leave</i>		
<i>Performance Evaluation</i>		
<i>Grievances</i>		
<i>Resignations and Dismissal</i>		
<i>Retirement</i>		
<i>Personnel Records</i>		
3.2.2 - Collection Policy ❁		
<i>Must Include:</i>		
<i>Responsibility for Collection Development and Selection</i>		
<i>Selection Criteria</i>		
<i>Weeding</i>		
<i>Disposition of Gifts</i>		
<i>Intellectual Freedom</i>		
<i>Organization of the Collection</i>		
<i>Complaints about the Collection</i>		
3.3.9 - Acceptable Internet Use Policy ❁		
3.5.1 - Safety, Security and Emergencies Policy ❁		
3.5.5 - Working Alone Policy ❁		

## Library Board Development Kit

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### Discussion: Policy checklist (continued)

Policies in the Ontario Public Library Guidelines 4 <sup>th</sup> Edition	Policy Status	
	Have	Don't Have
4.1.2 - Circulation Policy *		
<i>Includes</i>		
<i>Borrowing Policy</i>		
<i>Circulating Materials</i>		
<i>Loan Periods</i>		
<i>Overdues</i>		
<i>Renewals</i>		
<i>Reserves</i>		
<i>Lost or Damaged Materials</i>		
<i>Circulation Records</i>		
4.1.5 - Confidentiality of Library Records Policy		
4.2.2 - Reference and Information Policy *		
4.4.1 - Children's Services Policy *		
4.7.2 - Programming Policy		
4.8.2 - Community Information Policy		
4.9.2 - Local History Policy		
4.10.1 - Public Meeting Room Policy		
5.1.3 - Resource Sharing Policy *		
5.2.3 - Volunteers Policy		

## The library board and the community

In this section, we will look at the library board and the community, as well as in the larger library community.

The board's relationship with the community is one that is frequently taken for granted. "Of course we represent the community in all its diversity," comment trustees, "that goes without saying." When asked to specify what the board is doing to represent the community, the response is often slow and sometimes sheepish.

- How carefully do we think about representing our communities?
- How often do we make a point of examining that relationship?
- How can the board make regular connections a habit by building them into the board's plan for the year?

The library board is the link between the library and the community and the library and the municipal council. This board role is critical to the success of the library; without this connection, planning may be ineffective, resources may be jeopardized and the library may not reach its full potential in the community.

The ***Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, chapter P.44*** directs library boards to provide comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community's unique needs (Section 20a). In order to do this, the board must know those needs. Part of this knowledge comes from regular needs assessment surveys; however, there's more to it. A regular agenda of meetings with the community helps the board to become aware of community issues, to share information about library mission, to develop liaisons, and to enrich the board's understanding of the diversity of interest and opinion in the community. It is important to link with the organizations and groups that share the library's mission and users. These tasks are key board activities.



### Why should boards focus on the relationship with the community?

John Carver's Policy Governance® model identifies linkage with the ownership as a critical job for a governing board. In a public library, the ownership is the community. There is a variety of reasons for library boards to reach out to the community it represents to create this connection and several techniques to achieve the linkage.

- Without regular contact with the community, how can the board collect enough information to make sound decisions on library issues and priorities? Surveys are not the only techniques available to boards to establish contact with the public. The board might also consider focus groups, town hall or special community meetings, as well as many others.
- Sharing information with the community about what is going on at the library is an important step in building a relationship with the community. While staff usually disseminates such information, the board can play an important role, too. Moving the board meetings from branch to branch is a simple way to facilitate the relationship with the people who use a library's branches. It is easier for people to attend a board meeting in their own branch and people will realize that the board is concerned about local issues.
- Regular contact with the community keeps the board advised on the needs, concerns and opportunities of the community as they are developing. A great deal can happen in a community between scheduled needs assessments. Rapid growth, demographic shifts, or increases in ethnic populations, can put considerable stress on library programming. The board with a strong relationship with the community is better able to adapt to changing needs and opportunities.
- Fulfilling the board's responsibility to carry out the assigned mandate of the library is another key reason to connect with both council and the community, given the environment of stricter accountability. The public expects to know that tax dollars have been spent in a responsible manner and that control processes are transparent. Current public library legislation requires public library boards to report annually to the province and to the council. Is the board in the habit of making a similar report to the community? An Annual Report is an ideal tool to advise the community of what has been achieved by the library for the community over the past year. Identifying one board meeting as the annual general meeting presents another opportunity to advise the community of what the library has accomplished.

The community and council may need education on the expanding potential of the library and its impact on local communities. In many communities, the library is assuming the role of a community centre, offering space for local groups to meet, acting as an information clearinghouse, and offering a wide variety of activities for all ages. Technology will also play an increasingly important role in the community life of the future. In addition to being attentive to the needs of the community, boards will have to lead their communities in exploring new opportunities afforded by technology. There is a new kind of public education role for libraries, one that is very much in keeping with being a trusted source of reliable information.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Community Development

It is vital that libraries are 'at the table' when decisions about the community are made. By participating in community groups and in discussions about planned programs and services, library boards, either through trustees or staff involvement, are better able to decide where the library can make the most community impact. At the same time, the community will view the library as an active and valuable community partner. (From Ontario Library Service North's Community Development resources which are posted at [www.olsn.ca/community-dev.php](http://www.olsn.ca/community-dev.php))

Libraries come to the table with a wealth of assets: free community space, technology resources, connections to the local economy, a sense of ownership by the community and, above all, a level of community trust. With these assets, the library can connect to all parts of a community, building those relationships and networks that contribute to strong social infrastructure. The library is an important community engagement catalyst.

(From: *The Engaged Library: Chicago Stories of Community Building*. Urban Library Council 2005)

### What is community development?

Library staff and trustees sometimes confuse community development with community outreach. The difference, while subtle, lies in their distinct focus. Whereas the focus of community outreach is typically that of providing library service outside of the library building, and reaching out to target audiences who would benefit from library service, community development focuses on the community's advancement and well being. Put another way:

- **community outreach** is about the library achieving its potential by reaching out to community;
- **community development** is about the community achieving its potential by working together to solve its own problems and build a successful future.

There are many definitions of community development but the basic concept was stated by the United Nations in 1948:

*"Community development is a process designed to create conditions of economic and social progress for the whole community with its active participation and fullest possible reliance upon the community's initiative."*

Community development is a process that involves the community in building a sustainable future and includes a variety of activities that build a stronger and more effective community. Community organizations should somehow further the overall development of the community. According to Ken Haycock, a well-known author and trainer in the library world, to be truly effective, public library boards must adopt community development as their fundamental mission. To do this, library boards must know where the library is going and lead it to achieve certain specific results that will benefit the community. The library's mission must be seen to contribute to the community – its business geared to making the community a better place to live. The direction and means to reach goals must be clearly set out and the board must know in advance what factors will equate to success. When the board's term is over, it must leave knowing that the library accomplished specific, tangible results for the community.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Community Development (continued)

### Activities demonstrating that the Board is geared to community development

Library boards can only be effective in community development if they concentrate on looking outward towards the community. If the library fails to relate to the community or function as an integral part of it, there will be little effect outside of the library. If libraries are to be successful, they will need to orient their activities towards making a difference in the quality of life in their communities. The following eight activities support community development:

- 1. Get outside the doors. Successful community/library relationships are proactive.**  
Trustees and staff that take an active role in the civic life of the community create the ‘two way street’ that positions the library at the center of community. This activity outside the library should be encouraged at every level.
- 2. Find the leaders. A concerted effort to discover who’s who in a community makes all the difference.**  
Reading local papers, asking long-time residents, attending civic events—all can be ways to find and work with the people who are already at the center of community activities.
- 3. Be creative about what the library can contribute.**  
Go beyond the obvious and be prepared to say “yes” to new ideas that fall within your mission.
- 4. Discover and contribute to the unique capacities and conditions of the community.**  
Cultural attributes, family requirements, the particular situations of neighborhood youth all provide opportunities to make the library indispensable.
- 5. Support local businesses and institutions.**  
Set up reciprocal relationships with them, advertise your services to them, spend discretionary funds locally. All of these activities will rebound to the library’s and community’s benefit.
- 6. Make the library building a community center.**  
Public buildings are community assets in many ways beyond simply being meeting spaces. The more people feel ownership, the more integrated the library becomes in community life.
- 7. Create a community-minded culture among trustees, library staff and volunteers.**  
All trustees and staff should be encouraged to learn names, attend events, develop relationships, and pay attention to community issues. Make the library a bridge to and among community populations.

continued...

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Community Development (continued)

### Activities (continued)

#### 8. Support library investments that jump start community redevelopment efforts.

A new library in a neighborhood brings hope and attention to areas that may have experienced disinvestment. Support new branches with resources for building social networks. When libraries engage their communities, the best characteristics of both library and community are mobilized. Individual gifts, local associations and institutions, the neighborhood culture, economy and physical environment all come together to create unique neighborhood communities. With supportive leadership from trustees, municipal council and library administration, there is no limit to the role local branch libraries can play in building vibrant communities.

Adapted From: *The Engaged Library: Chicago Stories of Community Building*. Urban Library Council 2005

## Learn about your community

Whether you want to be an active member of the community, an effective trustee or a community leader, you will have to be familiar with the community's issues, resources, needs, power structure and decision-making processes. Your initial orientation could include reading your local newspaper regularly, attending community events, reading reports and familiarizing yourself with available services as well as community projects and activities. Close observation of the community as you interact with it will also provide significant insights into the strengths and weaknesses of the community.

According to the Library Trustee Development Program in **Trustee Tip # 22**, the library board is the link between the library and the community. The board's role is seen as critical to the success of the library: "...without this connection, planning may be ineffective, resources may be jeopardized and the library may not reach its full potential in the community".<sup>3</sup> However, all staff, board members, volunteers, members and patrons have an important role to play in community development by sharing information and insights about the community.

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<sup>3</sup> "Connecting With Your Community". Library Trustee Development Program April 2002, Issue No. 22  
<http://www.library.on.ca/publications/trusteetips/Tip22e.pdf>.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Learn about your community (continued)

One systematic way to share community information is to collectively – as staff and/or board - work your way through the six ways to describe your community advocated in the SOLS publication *Creating the Future You've Imagined: A Guide to Essential Planning*. The six ways are:

- Social and economic factors
- Lifestyles and interests
- Groups and affiliations
- Agencies and services
- Changes occurring
- Community assets

## Assess community assets and resources, needs and issues

To be able to work effectively in a community development context, you will need to gather information about community strengths or assets. It is extremely helpful to undertake a comprehensive community assessment which will collect both **qualitative** and **quantitative** data on a wide range of community features. Often time and budget restraints will necessitate choosing between methods and limiting the assessment to particular areas of interest. It is important to keep in mind that your efforts to learn about the community can often be augmented by the work of other agencies. Look for planning and needs assessment reports already in existence that profile the community.

There are many methods of community assessment used in community development practice. A few of the more common methods are listed below; additional information is contained in the resources section.

Compiling a community demographic profile is an excellent start. It is helpful to update the profile periodically so you will be able to track changes that occur within your community and respond accordingly. A demographic profile includes statistical information about age, gender, language, visible minority status, education, and family income. Community demographic profiles are available for approximately 6,000 communities in Canada, along with comparative figures for Ontario, from Statistics Canada's *Community Profiles* at [www.statcan.ca](http://www.statcan.ca) .

Other community statistics may also be of interest to you, such as crime rates, morbidity and mortality rates, or availability of affordable housing. Some of these are available from Statistics Canada, but local data may be obtained from local agencies; e.g. the local police service will have crime statistics.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Learn about your community (continued)

### Assess community assets and resources, needs and issues (continued)

However, simply collecting information is not sufficient; it must be analyzed in order for it to be meaningful. For example, you might be interested in the relative proportion of seniors to youth in your community, or the proportion of the population for whom English is a second language. You may want to compare the most recent data available with previous years; perhaps to identify the rate of growth of the population, changes in ethno-cultural patterns or age distribution.

Statistical information isn't the only type of information that is important to collect. Finding out how residents perceive their community is also essential to effective community development practice. Community surveys, community asset mapping, environmental scans, focus groups and key informant interviews are other methods of obtaining community data. The City of Calgary has an excellent publication on community assessments. It contains background information on the need for community assessments, describes various methods and provides easy-to-follow worksheets for planning and implementing a community assessment process.<sup>4</sup>

The process of community asset mapping can be very energizing and rewarding for the participants, forcing people to focus on the good things in their community. Engaging a cross-agency group in this activity can be a tremendous community development strategy in and of itself.

### Listen to community members

You will not be able to learn everything you need to know by reading and observation. You will need to talk to others about their interests and perceptions to put it into context. You can contact community members through formal channels, such as joining a local organization, or informally by chatting with people who visit the library or who you encounter in other situations, such as shopping at local stores or attending school activities. By listening to the community you may identify an area in which there seems to be a common interest in making a change.

Library staff and board members need to maintain regular contact with the community to collect enough information to make sound recommendations and decisions on library services and priorities and to identify important community issues.

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<sup>4</sup> City of Calgary. Community Assessment Handbook. [www.calgary.ca](http://www.calgary.ca). (accessed Jan. 12. 08)

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Learn about your community (continued)

### Making it work

For a library to become a significant player in a community development process some particular organizational attributes are required. The library board and key personnel must be willing to take the initiative and tread into areas that are not traditionally seen as being within the mandate of the public library. They will need to be open to new ideas, new ways of doing things and developing new partnerships.

Part of the work of the library is to help community members recognize and articulate their causes and concerns. After that the library can help to establish a vehicle for change which in most cases will start as a steering committee.

Community development work depends on public standing, credibility and building the library's profile in the community<sup>5</sup>. Information should flow both ways. It is important to tell the community what is going on and what is new at the library, without asking for any support. Patrons and non-patrons alike should know how to contact the board. Are the names and profiles of board members on the library's Web site? Do board members have business cards to give to contacts they meet when attending and participating in community events? The library board can improve its visibility and strengthen accountability when the community can easily make contact.

**Resources** - In addition to the resources in the separate resources section, specific resources for community development include:

- Ken Haycock's Community Development Sessions, Ontario Library Boards' Association (All are available on the OLBA website at [www.accessola.com](http://www.accessola.com).)
  - Ontario Library Boards and Community Development: New Initiatives for New Times, or...No, this is not what we have always been doing...,"
  - Community Development: The Board's Visioning Process
  - Community Development: Roles and Relationships
  - Tracking Board Success,

### Internet resources on Community Development

- Canadian Community Economic Development Network (CCEDNet) is a national organization committed to strengthening Canadian communities by creating better economic opportunities and enhancing environmental and social conditions - <http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca/en>
- Community Development Foundation: [www.cdf.org.uk](http://www.cdf.org.uk)
- Community Engagement: Government of South Australia. <http://www.dfc.sa.gov.au/pub/tabId/246/itemId/1757/moduleId/909/Community-engagement.aspx>

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<sup>5</sup> Ken Haycock. "Community Development: Roles and Relationships Teleconference", Ontario Library Boards' Association, May 2003.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## The board and the broader library community

There are other relationships that the board may wish to cultivate. From a broader perspective, the board may wish to promote library interests with provincial or federal politicians, depending on the local issues and projects. Making sure your provincial politicians are aware of your library and its role in the community does help to improve the library's profile and it is important to get your message out when you're not just after something.

It is important also for boards to look to the broader library community both to learn from others and to share valuable experience with others. Taking advantage of networking opportunities, such as Trustee Councils or other training opportunities, introduce your trustees to others in the province, and encourage exchanges of information, views and sharing experiences. Taking a more active role both increases knowledge of library issues and helps trustees feel that others share similar challenges.

If networking opportunities are not available in your area, consider making one happen. Invite trustees from neighbouring boards to join you to discuss current issues.

Finally, join other trustees in furthering the aims of Ontario's public libraries by joining the Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA). A similar national organization, The Canadian Library Trustees' Association (CLTA), considers library issues across Canada.

In southern Ontario, library trustees can participate in the Trustee Councils. The **purpose** of the SOLS Trustee Councils is to provide:

- A communication link between SOLS and boards regarding SOLS' services.
- A forum for sharing information and an opportunity to hear how other boards deal with similar issues.
- Suggestions and support for trustee training.
- A pool of trustees from which to elect members to the SOLS board.

Trustee Councils meet twice a year in eight locations. All public library boards are requested to appoint a representative to its area Council but in addition, other trustees are welcome and encouraged to attend. The meetings are a combination of information sharing and updates on various issues of concern to public library trustees, including an update from a representative of Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA). Training sessions are occasionally included in the meetings.

Clearly, participating in networking opportunities or other training opportunities with other trustees encourages exchange of information, increases knowledge of library issues and helps trustees to face challenges.



## Glossary of library terms

### **ABFO**

Association des bibliothécaires francophones de l'Ontario (a division of the Ontario Library Association)

### **acceptable use policy**

Guidelines established by a library to control how its computer systems and equipment may be used. For example, some libraries forbid the use of computer workstations for commercial activity. Libraries often post a printed statement of acceptable use policy near the workstations to which it applies and/or make the policy statement available on the library's website.

### **access**

The ability of a patron to make use of the materials in a library collection, including the physical accessibility of works in print, microform or electronic format. In bibliographic databases, the method by which a computer retrieves records in a file depends on how they are arranged in storage. In computing, the privilege of using a computer system or online resource, which is usually controlled by the issuance of access codes to authorized users. In a broader sense, the ability of a user to reach data stored on a computer.

### **accessibility**

Accessibility generally refers to the ease with which a person may enter a library, gain access to its online systems, use its resources, and obtain information regardless of format.

### **accessibility legislation**

In Ontario, the current legislation for accessibility is the ***Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005***. **AODA** became law on June 13, 2005, with the purpose of developing, implementing and enforcing accessibility standards respecting goods, services, facilities, accommodation, employment, buildings, structures and premises on or before January 1, 2025. These mandatory accessibility standards apply to public, broader public and private sectors in all key areas of daily living. More information is posted at <http://www.mcsc.gov.on.ca/en/mcsc/programs/accessibility/index.aspx#>.

### **Accreditation**

A further voluntary step in the *Ontario Public Library Guidelines* process enables a public library to submit its services to an external assessment and seek accreditation by its peers. Although the *Guidelines* can remain a purely local tool, particular to each community, their value increases in a provincial context. The opportunity for a library to measure itself successfully against a set of objective, widely accepted guidelines, and strengthens the individual library and the public library service of the province as a whole.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### **adaptive technology**

This phrase is used when referring to systems, devices, and software specifically designed to make library materials and services more accessible to people with physical and/or cognitive disabilities. Examples might include large print books, closed captioned recordings, Braille signage, screen magnification, screen reading software and voice amplification devices. Synonymous with *assistive technology*.

### **aisle**

The space left unoccupied between two parallel bookcases or shelf ranges to allow for passage of people. Under U.S. ADA (*Americans with Disabilities Act*) requirements, minimum aisle width in public buildings, such as libraries, is 36 inches, which is the same as has been recommended for years in Canada. In Ontario, the new Built Environment Standards under **AODA 2005** will dictate distances for new buildings and renovations.

### **ALA**

American Library Association includes **ALTA** (American Library Trustee Association)

### **AMICUS**

The information system of the Library and Archives Canada and an important resource for the Canadian library and research community with a database of over 10 million records and 15 million holdings from 450 Canadian libraries. Libraries can use AMICUS to search for bibliographic records

### **AMO**

Association of Municipalities of Ontario

### **AMPLO**

Administrators of Medium-sized Public Libraries of Ontario

### **Annual Survey of Public Libraries - (ASPL)**

The **Annual Survey of Public Libraries** provides important data on library services and operations in Ontario. Completion of the **Annual Survey of Public Libraries** is one of the requirements for receiving the library operating grant. This form must be completed by all library boards, and First Nations and Local services boards that have established libraries.

### **APLL**

The **Advancing Public Library Leadership (APLL) Institute** is designed to expand leadership capacity of public library CEOs and managers. Launched in 2008, the APLL Institute's certificate program takes two years to complete, with participating library staff doing independent course work in 12 key areas. Administered by Southern Ontario Library Service.

### **ARUPLO**

Administrators of Rural/Urban Public Libraries of Ontario

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### audiobook

A book that is read aloud and recorded, usually by a professional actor or the author, is an audiobook. Originally, audiobooks were produced on tape for the visually impaired, but the market has expanded to anyone who would rather listen than read. The format started out as a cassette tape, and then to compact disc (CD). Presently many audiobooks are downloadable to a device such as an Ipod or computer (these are called 'downloadable audiobooks'). Synonymous with *book-on-tape*, *recorded book*, and *talking book*.

### audio download (also called downloadable audio)

An audio download is a type of data file containing recorded sound that are available over the Internet for transmission to a user's computer. This can be done free of charge or for a fee, depending on the arrangements and subscription terms. Digital Library Reserve® from OverDrive is a web-based, digital media service that allows library patrons to download popular digital audio books, eBooks, music, and video from a library's website. The OverDrive service currently available to most public libraries in Ontario. For information about OverDrive, see <http://downloadcentre.library.on.ca/4D45B7F8-3CB7-4738-A0E8-6BE0836047E9/10/644/en/default.htm>.

### bandwidth

The maximum capacity of the speed of transmission of a line in an electronic communications network, measured in bits per second, bytes per second, or Hertz (cycles per second). On the Internet, the amount of information in digital format which a given connection can carry. During periods of peak usage, bandwidth may determine speed of transmission, particularly in the case of large files, such as those containing graphics and/or audio.

### bibliographic record

A bibliographic record is an entry representing a specific item in a library catalogue or bibliographic database, containing all the necessary data elements for a full description and presented in a specific format. In cataloguing today, the standard format is a MARC (Machine-readable catalog record), but prior to the use of computers, the traditional format was the printed catalogue card.

### Books on tape

See audiobook.

### bookstore model (also called retail service delivery model)

This term is used to refer to a philosophy of librarianship based on the style of large bookstore chains in which the focus is on the library patron as a customer and the ambiance is very patron-focused. For example, more books are displayed face-out on bookstore-style shelving, and interiors are designed to please the eye, with comfortable seating, professionally designed signage, book displays, and a coffee shop or cybercafe. Portions of the collection may be arranged according to reading interest (e.g. health, business and finance, genre fiction).

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### **borrower**

A person who takes out books and other items from a library. Libraries generally require borrowers to register and receive a library card before borrowing privileges are granted. Some form of identification is usually required of new applicants. Not all library users are registered borrowers--in most public libraries, anyone may use reference books and materials from the circulating collection onsite.

### **broadband**

High-speed data transmission, commonly used for Internet access via cable modem, DSL, or wireless network, which provide higher bandwidth than a slower dial-up (modem) connection.

### **call number**

The coded symbol used to identify and locate a particular work. It usually consists of the classified number, an author number and may also include other identifying symbols.

### **CALUPL**

Canadian Association of Large Urban Public Libraries

### **CAP**

Community Access Program (Industry Canada)

### **Catalogue**

A list of books, periodicals, maps, and other materials. In a card catalogue, the holdings of a library appeared on catalog cards filed by author, title, and subject. Most library catalogues are now in electronic form, and available via the web. The activity of preparing bibliographic records for a library catalogue is called cataloguing.

### **CELPLO**

Chief Executives of Large Public Libraries of Ontario

### **CLA**

Canadian Library Association. Includes **CAPL** (Canadian Association of Public Libraries) and **CLTA** (Canadian Library Trustee's Association). Website is [www.cla.ca](http://www.cla.ca)

### **consortium**

An association of libraries and/or library systems established by formal agreement, usually for the purpose of resource sharing or bulk purchasing power. One local example is **COOL**, the Consortium of Ontario Libraries, a group, formed in 1998, which negotiates province-wide licensing agreements for electronic resources.

### **CSIF**

Acronym for the grants from the [Cultural Strategic Investment Fund](#) which supports not-for-profit organizations working in arts, public libraries, heritage, or cultural industry organizations. Libraries formerly accessed the 'Library Strategic Development Fund'.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### database

A continuously updated computer file of related information, abstracts, or references on a particular subject, arranged for ease and speed of search and retrieval. An on-line library catalogue is also a type of database - this time, of bibliographic records.

### Dewey Decimal System

A method of organizing library collections developed by Melvil Dewey, using numeric notation. All knowledge is divided into ten categories and then further into subcategories.

### digital

Data transmitted as discrete and discontinuous voltage pulses (off and on) represented by the binary digits 0 and 1, known as bits. In digitized text, each character is represented by a specific eight-bit sequence called a byte. Most computers used in libraries transmit data in digital format. The term is also used when referring to images.

### digital image

An analog image that has been changed, usually by a scanner or digital camera, into a grid array (matrix) of small *picture elements, also called pixels*, that hold binary data quantifying the size in area of the location and the color and brightness of the image at the location. The data of which a digital image is comprised can be stored on a computer, manipulated, transmitted electronically, printed, reproduced on film, or displayed on a computer monitor or television screen.

### digitization

The process of converting data (printed material) to digital format. In information systems, digitization usually refers to the conversion of text or image (photograph, illustration, map, etc.) into digital signals, using some kind of scanning device, to enable the result to be displayed on a computer screen.

### disaster plan

A set of written procedures prepared in advance by the library staff to deal with an unexpected occurrence that has the potential to cause injury to personnel or damage to equipment, collections, and/or facilities sufficient to warrant temporary suspension of services (flood, fire, earthquake, etc.). A disaster plan should begin with an assessment to identify the most vulnerable areas and to evaluate any measures that can be taken in advance. The plan should include an initial action plan and a recovery plan.

### domain name

The unique name that identifies an Internet site, the domain name is the address of the computer on the Internet where the Web page is located. For example, *sols.org* is the domain name portion of the Southern Ontario Library Service Web site address, <http://www.sols.org> and *olsn.on.ca* is the domain name portion of the Ontario Library Service-North Web site address, <http://www.olsn.ca>.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### E-Resources

Abbreviation of **electronic resources**. Material consisting of data encoded for reading and manipulation by a computer. Most common format is to access e-resources remotely via the web. The category includes electronic texts such as journals, bibliographic databases, websites and e-books. Electronic resources not publicly available free of charge usually require licensing and authentication. In June 2010, the Ministry of Tourism and Culture provided a grant of \$2 million to Southern Ontario Library Service, in collaboration with Ontario Library Service – North, to “ensure that all public libraries are able to participate in a consortium that will provide equitable access to electronic information resources for Ontarians”. Through the grant, a selection of e-resources will be available to Ontario public libraries, with a second group/tier of e-resources available through a consortium purchase.

### electronic book -E-book

A digital version of a traditional printed book designed to be read on a computer or e-book reader (e.g. Kindle or Sony Reader). Although the first electronic novel was published in 1987, electronic books did not capture public attention until the online publication of Stephen King's *Riding the Bullet* in 2000. Some libraries offer access to electronic books through the library's online catalogue.

### endowment

A permanent, restricted net asset, the principal of which is protected and income from which may be spent and is controlled by either the donor's restrictions or the organization's governing board.

### EXCEL and Advanced EXCEL

A training program in managing a small public library that is offered as distance education and is administered by the Southern Ontario Library Service.

### Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (FOPL)

Library owned and driven, the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries is committed to advancing the interests of Ontario public libraries across the province and with all levels of government. In addition to representation through caucuses, there are three “task forces” – one for Advocacy, one for Marketing and one for Research and Development.

### filtering

In the context of the Internet, the process of preventing the users of a specific computer or computer network from accessing specific types of information, usually by means of special software designed to screen content and block access to sites considered inappropriate. Filtering is used primarily to prevent children from accessing sexually explicit material, and by employers to prevent employees from engaging in recreational activities while on the job. The controversy surrounding filtering involves issues of censorship and intellectual freedom.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### Friends of the library

An organization whose members share an interest in supporting a particular library or library system through fundraising and promotional activities. In some libraries, the Friends group operates a small gift shop or conducts an annual book sale, using the proceeds to support library programs and services. Friends members often serve as volunteers in the library, performing a variety of tasks from repairing books to storytelling. To support local groups, there is a **Friends of Canadian Libraries (FOCAL)** group.

### Gale Group

The Gale Group is a publisher of reference books (e.g. *Contemporary Authors*, in print and online. Gale is also one of the leading aggregators of journals in electronic format, providing online access to a range of bibliographic and full-text databases.. Since January 2007, Ontario residents have had free access to a suite of databases from Gale. See also **e-resources**.

### home page (or homepage)

Several meanings. Originally, the web page that your browser is set up to use when it starts up. The more common meaning refers to the main web page for a business, organization, person or simply the main page out of a collection of web pages.

### IFLA

International Federation of Library Associations

### ILL/ILLO

Interlibrary loan; lending and borrowing activities among autonomous library boards. When a book or other item listed in the catalog is checked out or unavailable for some other reason, or the library does not own the item, a registered borrower may request that it be borrowed from another library, usually by filling out a form. In Ontario, the system uses VDX as the software, and the library catalogues are either in the **INFO** (Information Network for Ontario) database or directly linked a library's catalogue using the **Z39.50** system.

### INFO - Information Network for Ontario

A resource sharing network for Ontario public libraries. Incorporates a web-based database which lists the holdings of libraries from across the province and an interlibrary loan system. The electronic database was originally designed as a CD-ROM product but now is available via the Internet from the Ontario Library Service website through software, from Fretwell-Downing, called VDX.

### information services

A major service of a library which assists patrons to find the information they need, either by answering their questions directly or referring them to an appropriate source. Also called **Reference services**.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### Internet

The network of networks which interconnects computers of all types throughout the world, enabling users to communicate via e-mail, find information on the World Wide Web, transfer data and program files via FTP (file transfer protocol), and access remote computer systems, such as library catalogues. The Internet began as ARPAnet, a project of the U.S. Department of Defense, and now has millions of users worldwide. Now synonymous with Net and Web.

### intranet

A private network inside a company or organization that uses the same kinds of software that you would find on the public Internet, but that is for internal use only.

### IP address

IP stands for 'Internet protocol', the physical address of a client or server computer attached to a network governed by the TCP/IP protocol, written as four sets of Arabic numerals separated by periods (example: 123.456.78.9). Each IP address has an associated alphanumeric Internet address in the 'Domain name system' (DNS) which is easier to remember. DNS is a table for translating numerical IP addresses (example: 123.456.78.9) into the alphanumeric domain name addresses (example: [www.thisuniversity.edu](http://www.thisuniversity.edu)) which are familiar to Internet users, and vice versa.

### ISBN - International Standard Book Number

An internationally agreed upon standard number that uniquely identifies an item such as a book.

### ISP - Internet service provider

A company or organization in the business of providing accounts which allow individual computer users to connect to the Internet, usually via a telecommunication channel such as cable, satellite, DSL, T1, in exchange for payment of a monthly fee.

### ISSN - International Standard Serial Number

Similar to an ISBN, except that it is assigned to periodical publications and the same number appears on every issue of that publication.

### JASI - Joint Automation Server Initiative

JASI is a cooperative project of member libraries in Ontario. Libraries pay a membership fee to share an automated library system and a single set of servers, based in Sudbury. The website for the project is [www.jasinorth.ca](http://www.jasinorth.ca).



# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### Knowledge Ontario - KO

**KO** is a collaboration of libraries, cultural heritage organizations and education institutions, which provides digital content and resources to all Ontarians. Projects include **Ask Ontario** (online chat reference service), **Our Ontario** (digitizing local history materials), **Learn Ontario** (software and resources for education), **Connect Ontario** (e.g. Bibliocommons which delivers a next generation online public access catalogue (OPAC) discovery layer and social networking space in public libraries) and **Resource Ontario** (electronic resources),

### large print

Books and periodicals set in 16 or 18 point type, sometimes larger, with more white space, thick dark characters and non-glare paper to provide ease of readability.

### LC

Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. Used by Canadian public libraries as a online source of bibliographic records, a source of subject headings (LC Subject Headings) and a location for digitized American history materials.

### library advocate

A person who appreciates libraries and their role in society to the extent of speaking and acting publicly in their support on issues such as funding and the freedom to read. The Canadian Library Association has taken an active role in training library advocates by offering a "Library Advocacy Now" workshop. An online version of that workshop is posted at <http://www.cla.ca/divisions/capl/advocacy/index.htm>

### Library and Archives Canada/Bibliothèque et Archives Canada

The combined national library and national archives of Canada, established in 2002 by the merger of the National Library of Canada (NLC/NIC) and the National Archives of Canada. Located in Ottawa, the institution is responsible for acquiring, preserving and improving access to the documentary heritage of Canada in all its forms. Its collections are focused primarily on Canadiana (materials written by, about, or of interest to Canadians, published in Canada or abroad). The web address is <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/>

### library collection

The total accumulation of books and other materials owned by a library, organized and cataloged for ease of access by its users. A library's complete collection may consist of several smaller collections, for example, the reference collection, circulating collection, serials, government documents, rare books, etc. Synonymous with holdings.

### library trustee

A library trustee is a member of an appointed board responsible for the governance of a public library under the terms of the **Public Libraries Act**. In Ontario, the term "library board member" is also used. Duties would include overseeing growth and development of a library or library system, including long-range planning and policymaking, public relations, and advocacy.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### licensing agreement

A formal written contract between a library and a vendor for the lease of one or more bibliographic databases or online resources, usually for a fixed period of time in exchange for payment of a periodic fee or per-search charges. Most licensing agreements limit the number of simultaneous users.

### lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is one of the roles suggested by the American Library Association as being appropriate for a public library. The role could be undertaken through bibliographic instruction or information literacy programs in which the library users obtain the skills they need to pursue knowledge at any age, apart from a formal educational institution. Public libraries play an important role in meeting this need because they provide access to materials in a wide range of topics at various reading levels, not only for school students, but for anyone interested in reading and learning.

### LISTSERV

Software responsible for the management and distribution of e-mail messages to members of a mailing list. Electronic mailing lists (listservs) provide forums for Internet users to participate in discussions or receive information on thousands of topics. You can join a listserv on a topic or group, and then e-mail addressed to the listserv name is copied to each member of the group. Opportunities exist for trustees to participate in listservs via the OLBA or Ontario Library Service.

### literacy

Generally defined as the ability to read and write with a minimal level of proficiency, the *literacy rate* of a country or area is usually expressed as the percentage of adult citizens who know how to read and write. A number of resources have been collected in the “Literacy Resources” section of the Joint OLS-N/SOLS Clearinghouse at <http://www.library.on.ca/links/clearinghouse/literacy/index.htm>

### LSC - Library Services Centre

A co-operative centre for acquisitions and cataloguing based in Kitchener, Ontario, which began as part of the Midwestern Regional Library System.

### LSDF

Acronym for the grants from the ‘Library Strategic Development Fund’ of the Ministry. It was formerly known by the term ‘Library Project Grants’ but now has been incorporated with other Culture groups into the [Cultural Strategic Investment Fund](#) which supports not-for-profit organizations working in arts, public libraries, heritage organizations.

### MARC - Machine Readable Cataloguing

An international standard digital format for describing bibliographic items, developed at the Library of Congress, to facilitate the creation and dissemination of computerized records between libraries and between countries.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### Ministry

The Ministry of Tourism and Culture presently has responsibility for the administration of the [Public Libraries Act](#). The ministry's Programs and Services Branch develops provincial policies for the public library system. Note that from time to time, the name, and groupings, of the Ministry responsible for libraries has changes, e.g. Culture, Citizenship and Culture, Culture and Recreation, etc.

### non-resident's card

A borrower's card issued to a person who does not reside within the legal boundaries of the area served by a library or library system, usually upon payment of a modest fee and renewable at regular intervals.

### OALT - Ontario Association of Library Technicians

An association of those who graduated from a library technician or library techniques program, most often offered at a community college.

### OLA - Ontario Library Association

Founded in 1900, the Ontario Library Association is the oldest and largest library association in Canada. OLA provides networking opportunities through programs, listservs, chat groups and regional meetings. There are educational opportunities through seminars and virtual programs of the Education Institute ([www.thepartnership.ca](http://www.thepartnership.ca)) and an annual conference (the OLA Superconference). OLA also undertakes lobbying and political action with the public and private sector, and works on co-ordination of mutual interests and needs through position papers, documents and creation of standards. OLA also acts as a source of information through its website at [www.accessola.com](http://www.accessola.com) and by acting as the agent for publications of companies such as Libraries Unlimited and Neal-Schuman. There are six divisions within the OLA including Ontario Public Library Association (OPLA), Ontario Library and Information Technology Association (OLITA) and the Ontario Library Boards Association (OLBA).

### OLC - Ontario Library Consortium

A number of county and public libraries in Southern Ontario who originally joined together to produce a union Catalogue on CD-ROM. The consortium coordinates a library automation system for its members.

### OLS - Ontario Library Service

A term used when referring to both Ontario Library Service-North (OLS-N) and the Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS). The web address for OLS-N is [www.olsn.ca](http://www.olsn.ca) and for SOLS, is [www.sols.org](http://www.sols.org)

### OLBA

Ontario Library Boards Association (a division of Ontario Library Association). Formerly known as OLTA or Ontario Library Trustees' Association. Offers the Leadership by Design program, information for which is posted at <http://www.accessola.com/olba/LBD/index.php> .

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### Ontario Public Library Guidelines

All Ontarians, regardless of where in Ontario they live and work, have a right to public library service that meets basic, widely accepted norms of library practice and service. The *Guidelines* offer a method for libraries throughout the province to meet basic service levels and to continue to grow to meet the ever-changing needs of their communities. The *Guidelines* are essentially a developmental tool. The primary target group is small, medium and county public libraries, but the *Guidelines* may be adapted for use by all libraries.

### Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council

The *Council*, composed of representatives appointed by their respective public library organizations, reports to FOPL. The purpose of the Ontario Public Library Guidelines Monitoring and Accreditation Council is to monitor the effectiveness of the *Guidelines* and make revisions as required; to arrange for peer audits of those public libraries which so request; and to bestow the special designation of "Accredited Ontario Public Library" on those public libraries that successfully complete the *Guidelines* accreditation process.

### OPLA

Ontario Public Library Association (a division of Ontario Library Association)

### outsourcing

The contracting of library services generally performed in-house to an outside service provider. Outsourcing has generated the *least* amount of controversy in conservation and preservation, purchasing machine-readable catalogue records, acquisition plans (e.g. approval plans, standing orders), physical processing, retrospective conversion and automation systems. The outsourcing of cataloguing and selection has met more resistance, primarily because of the belief that an outside contractor may lack familiarity with local conditions.

### patron record

The record in an electronic circulation system which contains data pertaining to a borrower's account (address, telephone number, items on loan, holds, unpaid fines). Some online catalogs allow a registered borrower to view his (or her) own patron record after entering an authorization code. Legislation requires that the patron records must be kept confidential.

### Pay Equity

Pay Equity is "equal pay for work of equal value", which is **not** the same as "equal pay for equal work". Equal Pay for Equal work, covered by the *Employment Standard Act*, requires employers to pay men and women equally for doing the same job or substantially the same job. The **Pay Equity Act** requires that jobs be evaluated, and work, mostly or traditionally done by women, be compared to work mostly or traditionally done by men – and that it be rated by value of the work. The Pay Equity Office (PEO) is responsible for implementing and enforcing the *Pay Equity Act*. The website for the Pay Equity Commission is [http://www.payequity.gov.on.ca/peo/english/about\\_us.html](http://www.payequity.gov.on.ca/peo/english/about_us.html)

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### performance evaluation

The process of judging the competence with which an employee has performed the duties and responsibilities associated with the position for which the person was hired, usually for the purpose of contract renewal or promotion. In libraries, job performance may be evaluated entirely by management or in a process of peer evaluation. One of the roles for the library board is to evaluate the performance of the Library CEO.

### PLA

Public Library Association (a division of American Library Association).

### planned giving

Planned Giving (according to *Planned Giving for Canadians* by Frank Minton & Lorna Somers) is the process of designing charitable gifts so that the donor realizes philanthropic objectives while maximizing tax and other financial benefits. Planned gifts are any donation of significant size made with forethought about the benefit to the charity and the financial implications to the donor and the donor's family. Planned gifts are often referred to as deferred gifts and include such giving instruments as bequests, life insurance policies, charitable remainder trusts, gifts of residual interest, and similar arrangements where the commitment is made now but the funds will not be realized by the charity until some future time. More recently, planned gifts can also encompass outright gifts or structured gifts that are realized more immediately, and include donations of securities or real estate with due consideration of tax and estate benefits.

### policy

All institutions require **policies** to govern what they do. These are a series of statements which form a set of rules of conduct (which may also be called a set of principles or guidelines). Policies are a tool that assists the library board in fulfilling its mission and the library staff in making day-to-day decisions. Policies guide action and contribute to the equitable delivery of library service. Policies should be written down, and not just what “someone” remembers the rules or policies to be. A library could have policies which relate to governance or are more operational in nature.

### pools

Co-operative ventures among libraries to purchase and share materials. In Ontario, pools include those for large print materials, videos, DVDs and, more recently, Playaway books.

### portal

A website or service that offers a broad array of resources and services, such as e-mail, forums, search engines, and on-line shopping malls. The first Web portals were online services, such as AOL, that provided access to the Web, but some traditional search engines, including Yahoo!, transformed themselves into Web portals.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### **problem patron**

A user whose behavior disturbs the normal functioning of the library. Problem patrons include those whose actions annoy others, persons who use the library for purposes other than reading and study, and individuals who deface library property or remove library materials from the premises without checking them out. Many libraries have invested in a security system to handle theft. Libraries with persistent problem patrons sometimes hire a security guard to maintain order during the hours the library is open.

### **procedure**

A prescribed method for carrying out a particular responsibility or action. This is as opposed to a policy which is more a set of rules.

### **public performance rights**

Video or DVD which patrons may show to public gatherings, such as classes, meetings (vs. home use for private viewing). Libraries should not just use those videos or DVDs which marked as **home use only** and require a license to show movies in the library, unless the video or DVD is marked as being public performance.

### **radio frequency identification (RFID)**

RFID involves using microchips in library materials and on the library card, enabling patrons to check out items by walking through a self-service station equipped with an antenna that emits low-frequency radio waves. When an RF tag (transponder) passes through the electromagnetic zone, a reader (antenna + transceiver) decodes the data encoded in the tag's integrated circuit, passing it to a computer that automatically links data from the physical item(s) to the patron record that corresponds to the library card. Line-of-sight is not required for this non-contact system. RFID technology is being used in many libraries. Because high-frequency radio waves can be used to track moving objects at a distance, the introduction of RFID technology in libraries has raised concerns about privacy.

### **Readers' Advisory Services**

A service which suggests reading materials to patrons. The staff member involved in readers' advisory work may recommend specific titles; compile reading lists by genre, theme, or subject; or instruct readers in the use of the library and its resources.

### **reciprocal borrowing privileges**

Libraries may establish reciprocal borrowing arrangements between them. In this way, loan privileges are given to residents of two or more municipalities to allow them to borrow materials free of charge from each of the libraries participating in the agreement.

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### remote access

A library is said to provide remote access when communication is established with a geographically distant computer system or network as if one were a local user. To log on to a network server, the user may be required to enter an authorized username and/or password. Special communications software and/or hardware such as a modem or dedicated line, may also be required. Ways of accessing computer systems remotely would include through wireless, cable, and DSL systems.

### repetitive stress injury (RSI)

Tendon and tissue damage resulting from the frequent performance of tasks requiring repeated movements of the hands, arms, legs, or torso, for example, the stamping of due dates on books and other items at the library circulation desk. Effects include chronic nerve and joint pain and swelling, carpal tunnel syndrome, and damage to the spine. RSI has been cited as a justification for the use of radio-frequency identification (RFID) technology in libraries. Preventive measures include regular rest breaks and changes in the ergonomic design of the workplace.

### reference services

The library service which helps patrons by providing information and instruction on the use of library resources, in response to questions posed by users.

### RFP - Request for Proposal

A call for proposals made by a library to suppliers or consultants to search for the most appropriate equipment or service.

### RSS Feeds

RSS is a simple XML-based system that allows users to “subscribe” to their favorite websites – that is, to be alerted to any changes that are made to a specific website. A number of organizations, such as SOLS, offer RSS feeds for information on their websites, to which anyone can subscribe.

### self-checkout

An automated circulation system that allows registered library borrowers to check out circulating materials on their own without the assistance of a library staff member. This is usually done by means of barcodes attached to the item and appearing on the patron's library card. Self-checkout is part of a trend toward self-service in library operations. *See also radio frequency identification..*

### SOLS

Southern Ontario Library Service. The website for this organization is [www.sols.org](http://www.sols.org)

### talking books

See audiobook

# Library Board Development Kit

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## Glossary of library terms (continued)

### technical services

All the activities and processes concerned with acquiring, organizing, preparing, and maintaining a library's collections. The two main branches of technical processing are acquisitions, which may include collection development, and cataloging. Together they comprise the technical services department of a library. This work usually does not require direct contact with library patrons.

### Trustee Council

An assembly of trustees representing individual library boards in each of the five regions of southern Ontario. Trustee Councils meet twice a year to share information and provide input to the SOLS Board of Directors. Each Trustee Council elects two members to the SOLS Board of Directors, and the smallest (with fewer than 20 libraries) elects one member.

### URL - Uniform Resource Locator

Each Web page is identified by a special address called the URL or the unique address of each web page at the websites on the World Wide Web. For example, the URL for the SOLS is <http://www.sols.org> while the website for OLS-North is <http://www.olsn.ca>

### VDX - Virtual Document Exchange

This is the Web-based Interlibrary Loan management system software used by libraries in Ontario. The system was developed by Fretwell-Downing.

### virtual library

A "library without walls", in which the collection and resources are not maintained on paper, microform, or in any tangible form, but are accessible electronically. Many libraries have developed their websites into a virtual library branch within the overall system.

### volunteer

A person who works for a library without material recompense. Library volunteers are often retirees who wish to make a contribution by remaining actively engaged in their community. In Ontario, volunteers may include high school students working on their mandatory community service hours (the 40 hours). They perform a variety of tasks, depending on their skills and talents, including reshelving, physical processing, mending, storytelling, landscape maintenance, etc.

### Z39.50

The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) is the 'standards' organization in the United States. An ANSI committee, Z39, was responsible for standardization in the field of library work and related publishing practices. This work is now done by the National Information Standards Organizations (NISO). Z39.50 is one of the standards or protocols for the exchange of information. It is a client/server-based protocol which allows computer users to query a remote information retrieval system (server) using the software of a different system, and displays results in the interface of the system used for input (client).



## Library Board Development Kit

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### Glossary of library terms (continued)

The acronyms and selected terms printed here have been compiled from the following documents and/or publications.

***ILC Glossary of Internet terms.*** The Web address is <http://www.matisse.net/files/glossary.html>

***ODLIS: Online dictionary of library and information science.*** Western Connecticut State University. Located on the Web at: <http://lu.com/odlis/>

***Webopedia: Online encyclopedia for computer and Internet terms.*** Located on the Web at: <http://isp.webopedia.com/>