

Topic: Library Board By-laws

1.7 Qualifications and Duties of Board Members

Board Motion Number: **23.042**
Date of Original Board Motion Number: **October 22, 2007**
Date of Current Issue: **June 27, 2023**
Date of Next Review: **2027**
Attachments: **Appendix A Code of Conduct**
Appendix B Board Member Self-Evaluation Form

Signature of Board Chairperson (and Date):

As guardians of 'public trust', Library Board members have a legal obligation to carry out their duties in a responsible manner.

1. The specific qualifications for membership on a Library Board are outlined in the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P.44, section 10.
2. In considering candidates for Board appointment, Township Councillors should keep in mind that a strong board represents the community it serves. Appointments, therefore, should reflect the Township's multicultural, geographical and vocational groups.
3. Candidates whose talents, training or background may be of value to the library should also be considered.
4. A Board member may hold office for one or more terms.

Duties of the Entire Board

1. The library board governs effectively by:
 - a) setting an annual library board agenda that reflects current goals and strategic issues
 - b) working proactively and making decisions that focus on the library's future and place in the community representing the interests of the community
 - c) providing opportunities for board development and training
 - d) working effectively as a team
 - e) working collaboratively with the Library CEO and the Council
 - f) self-evaluating board members performance biennially
 - g) engaging the community in determining responsive and dynamic library service
 - h) behaving with integrity

Individual Board Member Self-Evaluations will be completed at the end of the 1st & 3rd year of the Board term. (See **Appendix B**)

Duties of Individual Board Members

The library board expects its members to understand the extent of their authority and to use it appropriately. This policy sets out the obligations of individual board members. While an individual board member has several responsibilities, outside of a meeting of the library board he or she has no authority to make decisions.

1. Each board member is expected to become a productive participant in exercising the duties of the board as a whole.
2. Individual members of the library board are responsible for exercising a **Duty of Diligence** as follows:
 - a) be informed of legislation under which the library exists, board bylaws, mission, vision and values
 - b) be informed about the activities of the library and the community and issues that affect the library
 - c) be prepared for all board and committee meetings, contribute from personal and professional experience, and use meeting time productively
 - d) attend board meetings regularly and inform appropriate persons about expected absences before meeting
 - e) respect the agenda and abide by Board decisions on rules of order
 - f) deal promptly as a Board with lack of interest, poor attendance, disregard of policy on the part of any individual member
 - g) consider short and long term effects of decisions
3. Individual members of the library board are responsible for exercising a **Duty of Loyalty and Unity**, as follows:
 - a) adhere to the regulations of the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act. R.S.O. 1990, c. M50
 - b) act in the interest of the library members and community over and above other interest group involvement, membership on other boards, council or personal interest
 - c) express individual viewpoints but work harmoniously with the Board toward consensus as much as possible - speak with "one voice" once a decision is reached and a resolution is passed by the library board
 - d) represent the library positively to the community
 - e) respect Board authority since individuals may not act on behalf of the Board unless specifically designated by the Board. This includes interaction with the public or the media
4. Individual members of the library board are responsible for exercising a **Duty of Care**, as follows:
 - a) promote a high level of library service
 - b) consider information gathered in preparation for decision making
 - c) offer personal perspective and opinions on issues that are subject to library board discussion and decisions
 - d) show respect for the opinions of others
 - e) treat others in a courteous, dignified and fair manner
 - f) encourage and respect diversity of viewpoints and skills
 - g) assume no authority to make decisions outside of board meetings
 - h) know and respect the distinction in the roles of the library board regarding governance and the employees, management and operations
 - i) refrain from individually directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the employees
 - j) respect the confidential nature of library service to users while being aware of, and in compliance with, applicable laws governing freedom of information
 - k) resist censorship of library materials and programming by groups or individuals
 - l) support intellectual freedom in the selection of Library materials

m) take responsibility for personal professional development through continuing educational opportunities and participation in regional, provincial and national organizations

5. Board members will review and follow the ***North Kawartha Public Board Code of Conduct*** (see **Appendix A**)

Appendix A:

Board Code of Conduct

Within the framework of the North Kawartha Public Library Policy 1.7, it is the duty of library board members to maintain high ethical standards. This commitment includes the proper use of authority, appropriate decorum in group and individual behavior and respect for others and their contributions to the Library. As such:

Respect

Within the framework of the legislative and policy requirements of the Ontario Human Rights Code, and the Workplace Harassment and Discrimination and the Prevention of Workplace Violence Policies, members will fulfill their responsibilities in ensuring that the Library is free from discrimination and harassment. No Member shall:

- a) Speak disrespectfully of any member of the Board, staff or volunteers.
- b) Use offensive words in meetings of the Board or against any Member.
- c) Speak in a manner that is discriminatory in nature based on an individual's age, colour, ancestry, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity/expression, sex, or sexual orientation.

Board meetings

With the understanding that Library Board meetings are public and that their behavior affects the image of the North Kawartha Library, Board members shall:

- a) Not speak on any subject other than the subject in debate.
- b) Not disobey the decision of the Chair or of the Board on questions of order or procedure or upon the interpretation of the rules of the Board

Use of Library Property and Resources

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

Privacy and Confidential Information

Members will respect the privacy of others and will not disclose or release by any means to any member of the public, any confidential information acquired by virtue of their position within the library. Members will maintain this obligation even after leaving the Board.

Conflict of Interest

Within the legislative framework of the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*, Board members will act in the public interest and not engage in conflicts of interest, either apparent or real. The duties and responsibilities to the Library should not compete with private interests, financial or otherwise and the interests of family, friends or associated organizations.

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

Political Neutrality

Members will not use Library facilities, equipment, supplies, services (including staff services) or any other resources for election campaign or campaign-related activities.

Members will not use a position of authority at the Library to compel staff or volunteers to engage in partisan political activities.

Gifts

Members will not accept or provide any gift or benefit where it may be, or perceived to be, in exchange for favour or influence.

Exceptions:

- Small gifts (cards or edibles, such as chocolates or cookies)
- Advertising material (calendars, scratch pads, pens, t-shirts)
- Any hospitality or gift that has a monetary value under \$100

Financial Accountability

Members will:

- Avoid situations where personal advantage or financial benefits may be gained and not use “inside information” in personal or private business
- Avoid using position to obtain employment for self, family or friends
- Withdraw from Board if seeking employment with Library

Additional Code of Conduct for Library Board Chair

Library Board Chair:

- Assumes no authority to make decisions outside Board-dictated mandate
- Assumes no authority to speak for Board on issues not yet decided
- Ensures all issues that belong to Board governance are brought to the Board for consideration and all relevant material is available
- Keeps deliberation fair, open, thorough, but also efficient, timely, orderly and to the point



Individual Board Member Self-Evaluation Tool

	Agree	Disagree	What can I do to improve in this area?
I rarely miss a scheduled board meeting.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I am prepared for all meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I read all documents and reports prior to voting on issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I respect and support all Board decisions even if I do not agree with those decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I use my individual abilities and skills to enhance the board's overall performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I understand that I have an obligation to act in the best interests of the library at all time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I freely offer my opinions during any deliberations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I welcome and consider the opinions and perspectives of others.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I do not attempt to exert individual authority over the CEO or staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I do not attempt to represent the board without being authorized to do so.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

I respect the confidential nature of items discussed in camera.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I understand the requirements of the Public Libraries Act and accompanying Regulation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I support the Board chair in promoting effective meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I have a clear understanding of my role.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I am careful to focus only on board issues and leave the running of the library to the CEO.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I can provide feedback in discussion in a constructive manner.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I am a strong advocate of the best possible library service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I am committed to the library's mission.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I support the library in a variety of ways (e.g., attend events)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I understand the library's financial issues and implications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
I am aware of the programs, services, and events of my library.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	