

Muskoka Lakes Township Public Library LIBRARY BOARD POLICY

Policy Type: Governance	Policy Number: GOV-02
Policy Title: Board Orientation, Training and Evaluation	Policy Approval Date: 09/21/26
Chairperson: V. Duke	Policy Review Date: 09/30

Intent:

To be effective, the Muskoka Lakes Public Library Board (herein after referred to as the Board) must have sufficient knowledge of Board governance and issues that are central to the role of the Muskoka Lakes Public Library (herein after referred to as the Library) in the community. This policy sets out the requirements for Board orientation, ongoing training and evaluation.

Guiding Principles:

The orientation of Board members is necessary for there to be a common and shared understanding of the authority and role of the Board as a *governance* Board and not an *operating* Board. Ongoing training and an annual self-evaluation help Board members focus on good governance, strategic directions and policy implications rather than on operational details.

Section 1 – Orientation

The Chief Executive Officer (herein after referred to as the CEO) and the Board Chair will be responsible for providing or arranging a thorough orientation for new Board members within two months of their appointment to the Board.

The orientation will include but not be limited to:

1. the purpose, structure, function and duties (including Code of Conduct) of the Board
2. the ***Public Libraries Act***, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44
3. the Library's Vision, Mission and Values statements, as well as the Library's Strategic and Annual Plans
4. the Board policies and by-law
5. the accessibility standards set out in the Regulations of the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disability Act*, including the sections of the Human Rights Code that pertain to persons with disabilities
6. a tour of the Libraries in Port Carling and Bala
7. an introduction to employees and a description of their position and function in relation to the work of the Library
8. the services of the Library

The CEO will distribute to all new Board Members:

1. Copy of the ***Library Board Orientation*** materials prepared by the Ontario Library Service
2. Copy of ***Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance***. (Ontario Library Boards' Association)
3. Online Link to the Public Libraries Act
4. Online link to the Library's, Policies, By-law, Strategic Plan and Board meeting minutes

5. Copy of the annual operating plan and the current budget
6. Board minutes and reports from the previous meeting
7. Library handouts which are provided to the public
8. Application for Library membership (if not currently a member of the Library)

In the first year of its term, the Board will review and discuss sections of the **Governance Roles and Responsibilities** materials, prepared by Ontario Library Service.

Section 2 – Ongoing Training

Ongoing training ensures that Board members focus on good governance, strategic directions and policy implications rather than on operational details. The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) will provide the Board members with information about training and networking offered by various organizations in Ontario.

1. To ensure ongoing education, the Board will:
 - a) schedule time for Board training
 - b) consider a membership in the Ontario Library Association and the Ontario Library Boards' Association
 - c) appoint one or more Board members to participate in the semi-annual Board Assembly meetings and to report back to the Board on the meetings
 - d) encourage members to access materials available on the Ontario Library Service Governance Hub which is organized around the 4-year life cycle for public library boards consistent with Ontario's 4-year Board and municipal council terms
 - e) consider providing funding for Board training, including conference attendance. The cost of any training must be approved by the Board before it is undertaken. Members will report back to the Board on their participation in training events
2. Board members are encouraged to participate in training opportunities that include, but are not limited to:
 - a) effective governance
 - b) planning
 - c) advocacy
 - d) funding development
 - e) decision making

Section 3: Board Evaluation

The Board will monitor and assess its efficiency and effectiveness in fulfilling its responsibilities and achieving strategic goals. The evaluation results will provide a perspective of the preceding year and act as a guide for the coming year. Through the evaluation process the Board will acknowledge goals achieved, strengths and weaknesses and identify key areas for Board improvement as well as the required follow-up action.

The Board will evaluate its effectiveness on an annual basis in the areas of:

- a) Board conduct and practice
- b) Policy development
- c) Planning

- d) Advocacy
- e) Relationship with the CEO
- f) Financial oversight
- g) Board development and training

1. The Chair is responsible for managing the evaluation process.
2. Prior to completing the self-evaluation, Board members will review the Board's Mission, Vision and Values Statements, the Library's Strategic Plan and Annual Workplan.
3. In September, each Board member will receive a copy of the self-evaluation questionnaire, which is available on the Ontario Library Service website, and will complete it independently.
4. At the October meeting, Board members will submit their completed evaluations to the Vice-Chairperson who will collate them.
5. In November, the Vice-Chair will present a final report for the Board's consideration and discussion will take place in a closed session.
6. In January, the Board, in conjunction with the Chief Executive Officer, will formulate a work plan for the year which will highlight specific goals and objectives and improvements to be considered.

Related Documents:

Accessibility Standards for Customer Service and *Ontario Regulation 165/16*

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

Ontario Library Service ***Governance HUB*** MLPL GF-01 – Mission Statement

MLPL GF-02 – Vision Statement

MLPL GF-03 – Statement of Values

MLPL GOV-03 – Purpose, Duties and Committees of the Board

MLPL Strategic Plan

MLPL Annual Workplan

Ontario Library Service – Board Self Evaluation Questionnaire