Madawaska Valley Public Library Policy Manual

Policy Type: Governance **Policy Number: GOV-01**

Policy Title: Purpose and Duties of the Board **Initial Approval Date: June 2012**
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The Township of Madawaska Valley Public Library Board (the Board) is to govern the affairs of the Madawaska Valley Public Library (the Library) in providing service to the community. The policy sets the work of the Board and the ways in which the Board achieves its purpose.

Section 1: Purpose of the Board

1. The Board oversees the development of a comprehensive and efficient public library service by:
    a. developing and expressing the library board's philosophy and values
    b. articulating the library's mission, priorities and long-term strategy
    c. setting policies on governance and service
    d. delegating authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for management of library operation
    e. providing direction to the CEO through board motions, policies and plans
    f. providing feedback to the CEO through a performance appraisal process
    g. planning for further library development
    h. advocating for library service
    i. securing resources to achieve the intended results
    j. exercising financial control
    k. evaluating results of activities and services and assessing outcomes and impact.

Section 2: Duties of the Entire Board

2. The Board governs effectively by:
    a. setting an annual 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 CEO and the municipal council
    f. evaluating the Board's performance
    g. engaging the community in determining responsive and dynamic library service
    h. behaving with integrity
    i. holding all meetings in public unless closed for a special purpose within the framework of Section 16.1 of the *Public Libraries Act*.

Section 3 – Duties of Individual Board Members

The 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 meetings; and
    d) attend board meetings regularly, contribute from personal and professional experience, and use meeting time productively.

3. Individual members of the library board are responsible for exercising a **Duty of Loyalty**, as follows:
    a) adhere to the regulations of the ***Municipal Conflict of Interest Act***. R.S.O. 1990, c. M50;
    b) act in the interest of the library members and community over and above other interest group involvement, membership on other boards, council or personal interest;
    c) speak with "one voice" once a decision is reached and a resolution is passed by the library board;
    d) represent the library positively to the community.

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) assume no authority to make decisions outside of board meetings;
    f) know and respect the distinction in the roles of the library board with regard to governance and the employees, management and operations;

g) refrain from individually directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the employees;
h) respect the confidential nature of library service to users while being aware of, and in compliance with, applicable laws governing freedom of information;
i) resist censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

5. Board members will review and follow the **Madawaska Valley Public Library Board Code of Conduct** (see **Appendix A**)

Related Documents:
Policy Number **BL 01 Statement of Authority and Powers of the Board**
Policy Number **BL-04 Powers and Duties of the Board**
Policy Number **GOV-05 Policy Development**
Policy Number **GOV-06 Planning**
Policy Number **GOV-07 Financial Control and Oversight**
Policy Number **GOV-08 Board Advocacy**
Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M50

Appendix A

Board Code of Conduct

Within the framework of the Madawaska Valley Public Library Policy GOV-01, 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 behaviour 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 behaviour affects the image of the Madawaska Valley 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

1. 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.
2. Members will not accept payments to make referrals or to act as a paid agent before the Board or Board Committee.

Political Neutrality

1. Members will not use Library facilities, equipment, supplies, services (including staff services) or any other resources for election campaign or campaign-related activities.
2. 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:

a) small gifts (cards or edibles, such as chocolates or cookies);
b) advertising material (calendars, scratch pads, pens, t-shirts);
c) any hospitality or gift that has a monetary value under $100.