



**Southern  
Ontario  
Library  
Service**

***Board Appointments and  
Board Succession Management  
Clinic***

**Spring 2014**

## **Description Clinic: Board Appointments and Board Succession Management**

The legislation governing public libraries, *Public Libraries Act*, states that each local public library is controlled and administered by a local public library board appointed by the local municipal or county council, with a minimum of five board members.

Good governance happens when the board renews itself and ensures that members who value the library, and the principles for which it stands, are appointed to the board at the time of a municipal election or at other times.

Since library boards in Ontario do not appoint their own replacements, as advocates for the library, the board should work to influence the shape of the board in the future. This clinic will look at the basic requirements for board appointments, and ways to influence the appointments.

### **Part 1. Board Appointments**

Did you realize that current library board members are almost finished their four year terms? Fall 2014 – specifically Monday, October 27th will bring another municipal election and library board appointments will follow soon after. New members could be in place as early as mid-November 2014.

Managing board appointments ensures that the process is accomplished in accordance with the Public Libraries Act and ensures deadlines are met. It's also an opportunity to shape strong library leadership and governance for the next four-year term. There are, however, important issues to be considered:

- Library boards in Ontario do not appoint their own replacements.
- Appointments are made by the municipal council.

#### **a) Review of the Process for Making Appointments**

The *Public Libraries Act* (10(3)) states that library boards are appointed for the term of the appointing council (the municipal council or the county council).

The legislation also states that board members may be reappointed for one or more further terms. A few municipalities have a by-law which limits the number of terms, but the Act doesn't speak to limits on terms for board members.

**i) Time for Making Appointments - Key Points**

- the council has to make appointments within 60 days, specifically “SHALL do so at any regular or special meeting held within 60 days after its first meeting”.
- the notice of vacancy must be advertised in a newspaper of general circulation.

**Term**

**Section 10 (3)** A board member shall hold 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. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 10 (3).

**Time for making appointments**

**Section 10 (4)** The first appointments of members of a new board shall be made at a regular meeting of council and the member shall take office as soon as possible thereafter, and thereafter appointments shall be made at the first meeting of council in each term, but if the council fails to make the appointments at its first meeting, it shall do so at any regular or special meeting held within 60 days after its first meeting. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 10 (4); 2002, c. 18, Sched. F, s. 3 (10).

**Notice of vacancies**

**Section 11 (1)** The clerk of the appointing municipality or county or, in the case of a union board, the clerks of the affected municipalities shall give public notice of vacancies on the board by publishing a notice of them, inviting applications, in a newspaper of general circulation in the municipality. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 11 (1).

**ii) Composition of the Board – Key Point**

- A board shall be composed of at least five members.

**Number of council members on board limited**

**Section 10 (2)** The appointing council shall not appoint more of its own members to a board than the number that is,

(a) in the case of a public library board or union board, one less than a majority of the board; and

(b) in the case of a county library or a county co-operative library, a bare majority of the board. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 10 (2).

iii) **Qualifications of board member - Key Points**

- age
- citizenship
- residency requirements
- exceptions

The PLA legislation outlines the qualifications of a library board member.

**Board members**

**Section 10 (1)** 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 under section 29,

(iii) a resident of the board area of a local service board that has a contract with the board under sec. 29,

(iv) a member of an Indian band that has a contract with the board under section 29, 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. R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 10 (1); 2002, c. 18, Sched. F, s. 3 (9).

With that basic background information, Part 2 covers the process for managing board succession.

## Part 2. A Plan for Managing Board Succession

### a) Why the library board has a responsibility for Board Succession Management?

Managing the transition from one board to the next is a key leadership responsibility for Ontario library boards in the final year of their term. Recruitment strategies must address the major issues facing the library and the community. Progress can only happen if the board renews itself and ensures that members who value the library and the principles for which it stands are appointed to the board.

*NOTE: Current board members must apply to be re-appointed, same as other candidates.*

Making appointments at the beginning of each electoral term and filling vacancies is municipal council's responsibility. On the other hand, as advocates for the library, the board should have a significant influence on the shape of the board in the future. There are several things you and your library board can do to help the council make good decisions about the appointments to the board.

*Too often, however, the new council is not adequately focused or equipped for the task, and therefore highly qualified trustee applicants may be passed over, or not even interviewed. Ian Hunter*

Taking the time to develop a board succession plan will help to ensure a smooth transition from old to new board. As CEO, it is your responsibility to advise the board on this process. The chart provides the actions that make up the plan.

There are two types of work to undertake:

- recruiting good people and advocating to municipal council for the appointment of qualified people to the board.
- preparing the legacy documents from the out-going board for the new board

**b) Board Succession Management Plan\***

<b>Recruiting Good People</b>	
<b>STRATEGIES/ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>
1. Adopt Board Succession Management Policy	- Trillium Public Library Sample Policy – Appendix 1
2. Have a conversation with municipal staff about board composition and the appointment process	- Municipal By-laws or written procedures
3. Determine if the current board is representative of the community and if it has the skills necessary to handle upcoming challenges	- Inventory of Current Board page 6
4. Determine how the board will influence Council in its appointment of the new board	- Sample Correspondence, London Public Library Board - Appendix 3
5. Develop a library board member description to highlight qualifications and desired skills	- Sample London Public Library Board Trustee Position Description – Appendix 3
6. Prepare a library board information sheet for reference by potential board applicants	- <i>Cut to the Chase</i> . Ontario public library governance at-a-glance OLBA's Leadership by Design
7. Schedule information session(s) for interested applicants	-
8. Post a notice in the library to encourage library board applicants	-
9. Forward board member position description including required skills to municipal clerk	- Sample London Public Library Board Trustee Position Description – Appendix 3.
<b>Prepare Legacy Documents**</b>	
<b>STRATEGIES/ACTIONS</b>	<b>RESOURCES</b>
Evaluate the board's progress over the current term and identify pressing governance issues	-The library's strategic plan - Public Library Board Legacy Document Template. Leadership by Design. Networking with Our Peers. OLBA – Appendix 2.

\*Modified from Leadership by Design

\*\*See Section G below for Information about Legacy Documents

**c) Action – Inventory the Current Board:**

How many board members do you currently have? (The chart shows five which is the minimum number under the legislation but you could have more) Who will be seeking re-appointment? In the appropriate column, list their names, if only the first name. Mark if they are a council representative (from the municipality, county or band). For each person, identify one skill or interest that you think that they bring to the library board table (for example, accountant, building specialist, avid reader)

	<b>Name</b>	<b>Representation of which community group (council or citizen)</b>	<b>Skill, interest,</b>
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			

**d) Action - Define the Person You Need**

The next step is to define the person you need.

A number of guidelines exist to help boards identify the qualities necessary for new trustees. The *Public Libraries Act* specifies requirements that must be met before persons may be appointed to a library board. In addition, various publications over the years have suggested that an effective board member have the following qualities:

- concern and pride for the community
- firm connections and affiliations with the community
- conviction that the Public Library is uniquely important to the life of the community
- ability to approach problems and people with an open mind
- courage to resist pressures which interfere with the community’s democratic right to library materials and service
- time and energy

John Carver, a noted specialist on board governance, lists five qualifications for board members:

1. commitment to the ownership and the specific mission area
2. propensity to think in terms of systems and context
3. ability and eagerness to deal with values, vision and the long term
4. ability to participate assertively in deliberation
5. willingness to delegate, to allow others to make decisions

The trustee's job is not an easy one

A good potential trustee keeps overall goals in mind. He or she will also have a sense of accountability to the whole community. The person you are looking for will be someone who can be enthusiastic about working towards a vision, who can understand the long term nature of many of the library's goals and maintain the commitment to move vision to reality without being distracted by issues that are the responsibility of CEO.

He or she must believe that the library is integral to the quality of life in the community. Look for individuals who are equally at home discussing the philosophical aspects of library service in the community as well as the direct benefits that result from the library's programs. The trustee's job is not an easy one.

In recruiting new members, boards should beware of potential nominees motivated by personal crusades or issues. Using an appointment on the library board to further such causes or political missions will do the library no good. For instance, a trustee whose personal agenda focuses entirely on a service to one sector of the municipality will likely divert his energies and those of other board members away from broader library issues. Interviewing potential trustees helps with identifying people with a single interest for being on the board.

So at this point, you have information on the present board, and potential qualities of library board members and if you have created a legacy document you will have identified challenges for the library board over the next few years.

Now you have to get new members.



### e) Action- Meet with the Council to Discuss Your Needs

The recruitment process provides an important opportunity to build a rapport with council. Prepare an information package for the council. You can meet with the council to discuss the needs of the library and the qualifications and qualities required for new board members. Enlist the support of your municipal council representative during the appointments procedure and:

- Share with council the qualities required for new library board members
- Advise the municipal clerk that the library board members and CEO are willing to answer queries from interested citizens.
- Notify those who have expressed interest that applications should be mailed to the town office.
- Encourage councillors who are interested in the library to consider serving on the library board in their options for representation.

*Council wants to have a successful library board, so it should welcome assistance from the outgoing board...when recruiting the new trustees. Ian Hunter*

### f) Action - Get the Message out to the Community about the Library Board Appointments

**Search for potential trustees** - Determining the type of individual you want to sit on your board will lead naturally to suggesting names to fill the vacancies. Identify these individuals and invite them to attend a board meeting as “observers”. Where will you find such people? Many are already sitting on other community boards or are active in various service organizations or clubs. Perhaps they are also library users.

**Define the commitment** - In seeking potential board members, be sure to provide adequate background information about trustee roles and responsibilities and the time commitment for meetings and other activities. Be specific about the skills you want in new members and fully describe your library’s mission and the principles on which it stands. Once you have collected this information, combine it with other relevant data into an information package for prospective trustees.

**Encourage people to apply** - Communicate your personal commitment to the library to suitable candidates. Encourage them to make an application.

- Write an item for the local paper about library board appointments and the work of the trustee.
- Invite potential trustees to an information session at the library or host an information session somewhere in the community

### **g) Action – Legacy Documents**

Legacy documents are helpful with both the work of identifying the types of people needed on the board and the work of providing briefing material for the new board. It has been defined as: *a communiqué to the future leadership of the library. It provides an opportunity for the outgoing board to review its work over the past term; reflect on triumphs and strengths; and ponder fortunate opportunities and lost changes. Probing deeper, the board can contemplate how to overcome limitations and increase success in the future.*

Legacy documents can take various forms:

- the strategic plan is the most comprehensive legacy document
- the Ontario Public Library Guidelines pre-audit results report is an alternative
- Legacy Document Template in Appendix 2 or something similar, if it's not possible to provide the new board with either of these

## Appendix 1 – Succession Planning Policy

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### Trillium Public Library



Policy Type: **Governance**

Policy Number: **GOV - 12**

Policy Title: **Succession Planning**

Policy Approval Date:

Policy Review Date:

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An effective board is comprised collectively of people who have the knowledge, the skills and background necessary to govern with excellence and to lead the library in the realization of its vision. This policy sets out the requirements for recruiting board members and planning for board succession.

1. The board recognizes that the **Public Libraries Act**, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44, s. 10(4) requires that the council appoint library board members. To support the appointment process, the board will collaborate with council on a preliminary selection process.
2. The board will:
  - a) begin the search for potential successors, six months prior to the end of the current term
  - b) undertake a review of the board's effectiveness in governing and accomplishing the strategic plan
  - c) solicit input from the Chief Executive Officer (CEO)
  - d) match the board's needs with the expertise and interests of the current members and identify the gaps that will need to be filled
  - e) establish the selection criteria for the appointing of board members
  - f) identify suitable candidates and solicit their willingness to serve
  - g) inform the potential candidates of the imminent appointment process
  - h) provide the council with a list of recommended candidates
3. Potential candidates will be provided with briefing materials and information about library governance and services, which may include:
  - a) information on the library's vision, mission and values
  - b) information on the role, structure, code of conduct and function of the board
  - c) an introduction to the **Public Libraries Act**
  - d) an introduction to the bylaws and governance policies
  - e) a tour of the library
  - f) a copy of the current planning document

#### Related Documents:

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

## Appendix 2 - Public Library Board Legacy Document Template

**Based on the template from Leadership by Design – Networking with our Peers (Ontario Library Boards Association – OLBA)**

The legacy document provides an opportunity for the outgoing board to review its work over the past term. The board can make recommendations on how to address ongoing challenges and increase success in the future.

The document can be used as a communiqué to the appointing council and the incoming board.

<b>Library Board Legacy Document – Fall 2010</b>	
<b>Our library and its community partners</b>	The Community sees our library as...
	Municipal Council views our library as...
	Other key Community Partners view the library as...
<b>Major governance issues faced during our term (2006-2010)</b>	The LIBRARY BOARD faced these major governance issues during this term...
	We were able to accomplish....
	We were NOT able to accomplish...
	We can foresee these opportunities for the incoming board to address issues that remain outstanding...
<b>Our leadership</b>	We believe that our board is a strong community leader because...
	We see that the board could be even strong in its leadership if...
<b>Challenges for the new board</b>	We suggest that these issues are major challenges for the new board to tackle as a priority...
	We request Council's attention to the library issues that prevail and consider the following governance/leadership skills in making appointments to the new library board...

## Appendix 3 - London Public Library - Documentation regarding Library Board Trustee Appointments

Note: In this appendix, we have included a cover sheet from the CEO (dated 2008), a letter to the City Clerk, which was signed by the Board Chair (dated 2008) and a Library Board Trustee Position description (dated 2012).



### REPORT TO THE LIBRARY BOARD

MEETING DATE: September 17, 2008

Session:	Public Session
Subject:	Library Board Trustee Position Description
Prepared By:	Susanna Hubbard Krimmer
Presented By:	Susanna Hubbard Krimmer
Purpose of Report:	For Receipt and Information Only <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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#### Recommendation:

It is recommended that this report be received.

#### Issue/Opportunity

The attached is information that was provided to the City of London to provide background information to individuals interested in applying for the trustee vacancy on the London Public Library Board, City staff in answering questions and Controllers and Councillors in making an appointment.

It is also on the Library's website.

August 28, 2008

Mr. Kevin Bain  
City Clerk  
The Corporation of the City of London  
300 Dufferin Avenue  
London, Ontario N6B 1Z2  
519-661-2500 x4937

Dear Mr. Bain:

This letter is written related to the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, Sections 11 and 12, regarding where a vacancy arises in the membership of a library board. Thank you for initiating the steps required to give public notice of the vacancy and to hold office of Trustee, London Public Library Board. We were pleased to see that the process has been expedited.

In order to assist in this matter, the Library Board has prepared a document that can be used to provide information to individuals interested in applying for the vacancy; you and your staff in answering questions from interested people and in reviewing applications; and the Controllers and Councillors in making an appointment. Please find this document attached.

The document includes a section on core competencies and qualifications designed to support the selection and appointment of an individual who can make a difference in our community by being an effective London Public Library Board Trustee. The essential core competencies and qualifications are:

- Conviction that the public library is essential and uniquely important to the life of all Londoners and communities within London;
- Commitment to London and Londoners through active service to the community;
- Leadership experience;
- Business acumen;
- Ability to seek and listen to input from all stakeholders;
- Ability to approach people and problems with an open mind;
- Ability to actively participate in discussion and deliberation and to attain positive outcomes; and
- Time and energy.

We have also provided highly desirable qualifications, based on status of the **London Public Library Strategic Plan: Imagine!** and the current/emerging economic environment. The Library requires a well connected, credible community leader who brings:

- A large network of varied community contacts including the business/corporate, education, public and not-for-profit sectors; and
- Success in advocating for funding and political support.

Experience in the area of fund development would be an asset given that this will be a significant strategic emphasis for the Library Board the next few years.

Again, please accept our thanks for all of your attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require further information.

Sincerely,



## London Public Library Board Trustee Position Description

March 26, 2012

### Library Board

Public Library Boards are governing boards, legal corporations with the authority to make policy and to govern the library's affairs under the *Public Libraries Act*, RSO 1990, c. P.44.

A board's duty is to provide comprehensive, effective and efficient public library service that reflects the community's needs and builds community capacity.

The stakeholders of today's libraries expect strong leadership. Consequently modern governance must reach beyond ongoing budget oversight and a regular strategic planning exercise to embrace new ideas, and forge strong relationships that will support the library in its *Vision, Mission* and *Value Promise* to the community.

### Responsibilities

The primary roles of the London Public Library Board are to:

- Set the vision, mission and strategic direction for the library and, using strategic planning techniques, determine a strategy map to get there;
- Make policy within the framework of government legislation and regulations;
- Oversee the library's finances in accordance with public accounting principles and requirements and within municipal budget policy and procedures;
- Monitor overall effectiveness of the library in meeting community needs in an efficient and effective manner and evaluate progress on the strategic plan;
- Set fees where allowed by the Public Libraries Act; and
- Hire and evaluate a qualified Chief Executive Officer to implement the strategic plan and to manage the day-to-day delivery of public service and daily operations of the library.

The Library Board has the authority to act on behalf of the library; individual board members have no authority to act on their own.

## London Public Library Trustees

### Values

As a member of a library Board, a trustee must act honestly and in good faith and in the best interests of the library. This means that the interests of the library take precedence over personal interests or those of any group with which the trustee is associated.

Trustees are required to conduct themselves in accordance with the *London Public Library Workplace Harrassment Prevention Policy*, which states at London Public Library believes that it is the right of all employees, Board members, volunteers and any person having a relationship with the Library to be treated with dignity and respect. The Library is committed to providing a working environment which promotes mutual respect, provides equal opportunities and is free from harassment.

### Trustee Roles

Along with the governance, legal and fiscal roles, Library Board Trustees are expected to support and participate in community engagement by:

- Establishing the library as an essential community service;
- Building community pride in the library;
- Advocating the library's role in the community;
- Maintaining an open dialogue with the community;
- Building strong relationships with municipal council;
- Being aware of the municipal planning context; and
- Developing strategic partnerships with community groups and leaders.

In order to fulfill the above, London Public Library requires a well-rounded Library Board with competent, experienced trustees. The trustee's job is not an easy one: it requires the ability to work towards a vision and to think in broad, future oriented terms while maintaining a commitment to move vision to reality. This requires understanding and discussing the philosophical aspects of library service while implementing the necessary governance measures to achieve desired services. A good trustee keeps the overall vision, mission and value promise in mind while acting strategically.

The person appointed to the Library Board must be

- a Canadian citizen;
- at least 18 years old;
- a resident of London; and
- not employed by the Library Board or the Municipality.



## Essential Competencies & Qualifications

The essential core competencies and qualifications for a London Public Library Trustee are:

- Conviction that the public library is essential and uniquely important to the life of all Londoners and communities within London;
- Commitment to London and Londoners through active service to the community;
- Leadership experience;
- Business acumen;
- Ability to seek and listen to input from all stakeholders;
- Ability to approach people and problems with an open mind;
- Ability to actively participate in discussion and deliberation and to attain positive outcomes; and
- Time and energy.

## Time Commitment

The Library Board holds 10 regular monthly meetings a year. The time commitment includes: preparation time to read and consider reports and other information in the meeting package, and the meeting time of approximately 3 hours.

On occasion, Board members are also required to participate in public participation meetings designed to seek public input on key library matters.

Board members are expected to represent the library on external/bodies and committees such as the Ontario Library Boards' Association, Southern Ontario Library Service, etc. Time commitments vary according to the committee.

Board members may also elect to participate on "ad hoc" committees of the board which are established to deal with specific matters such as the hiring of the CEO or drafting specific policy.

## Compensation

Library Board Members are not compensated for time required to participate in the above activities.

### Additional Information

About London Public Library and about the Library Board (e.g. policies, reports, meeting agendas and minutes:

<http://www.londonpubliclibrary.ca/>

About the roles and accountabilities of Public Library Boards:  
Ontario Library Boards' Association, Leadership by Design (Much of the above content as adapted from the OLBA 2007 publication *Cut to the Chase*)

<http://www.accessola.com/olba/bins/index.asp>

About the roles and accountabilities of Public Library Trustees:

Ontario Library Boards' Association, Leadership by Design

<http://www.accessola.com/olba/bins/index.asp>

Southern Ontario Library Service, Trustee Tips

<http://www.sols.org/publications/trusteehints/index.htm>