



## Hastings Highlands Public Library

**Area:** Governance

**Policy Title:** Purpose of the Board

**Policy Number:** GOV-01

**Initial Approval Date:** Dec. 11, 2012

**Last Review:** April 24, 2025

**Year of next review:** 2029

The purpose of the Hastings Highlands Public Library Board is to govern the affairs of the public library in service to the community. This policy sets out the work of the board and the ways in which the board achieves its purpose.

1. The board oversees the development of a comprehensive and efficient public library service by:
  - a) expressing the library's philosophy and values
  - b) articulating the library's vision, mission, and priorities
  - c) evaluating results of activities and services used to achieve goals
  - d) setting policies on governance and service
  - e) delegating authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and evaluating his/her performance
  - f) planning for further library development
  - g) securing the resources to achieve the intended results
  - h) advocating for library service
2. The board governs effectively by:
  - a) representing the interests of the community
  - b) engaging the community in determining responsive and dynamic library service
  - c) acting as a bridge between the library and the Municipal council
  - d) working collaboratively with the CEO and the Municipal council
  - e) setting an annual board agenda that reflects current goals and strategic issues
  - f) working proactively and making decisions that focus on the library's future and place in the community
  - g) evaluating the board's performance

## **Section 1: Board Orientation**

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 after 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 library policies 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 Orientation Kit f) a copy of Cut to the Chase: Ontario Public Library Governance at a Glance. (Ontario Library Boards' Association)

## **Section 2: Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members**

The Hastings Highlands Public 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.

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 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) attend board meetings regularly and contribute to the work of the board d) be prepared for all board meetings and use meeting time productively.
3. Individual members of the 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, or councils or personal interest c) speak with "one voice" once a decision is reached and a resolution is passed by the board d) represent the library positively to the community
4. Individual members of the 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 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 board and the staff
- g) refrain from individually directing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and the staff
- 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

### **Section 3: Committees of the Board**

The Hastings Highlands Public Library Board may use ad hoc committees to further the work of the board. This policy ensures that the board establishes terms of reference and specific duties for each of these committees, as the need arises.

1. Committees report directly to the board and have no authority other than to draft recommendations or prepare alternatives for the board's consideration.
2. Committees operate for defined periods of time and have a specific purpose which must be defined in written terms of reference. Ad hoc committees will be formed by motion as needed.
3. Ad hoc committees coordinate the work, do the research, and draft the documents to be reviewed and adopted by the board as a whole.
4. An ad hoc committee that is established by the board may include non-board members.
5. Meetings of committees may be called by the chair of the committee or by a majority of the members of a committee.
6. Committees shall not supervise or direct staff.

#### **Terms of Reference**

##### **1. Purpose:**

- a) ensure that the board's policies meet the requirements of the Ontario Public Library Guidelines (OPLG)

##### **2. Responsibilities:**

- a) audit and evaluate existing policies based on the OPLG
- b) establish a work plan to review, revise and develop policies required by the OPLG
- c) research, draft and recommend new policies or policy revisions that align with the library's vision, mission and strategic plan

##### **3. Duration of the Committee:**

a) the committee meets until the library's policies comply with the requirements of the OPLG in preparation for accreditation.

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*GOV-01 Purpose of the Board*

*Hastings Highlands Public Library*

*Hastings Highlands Public Library Policy, Procedures & Guidelines*

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# Hastings Highlands Public Library Board: Policy, Procedures & Guidelines

## Governance Overview

Area: Governance

Initial Approval Date: Dec. 11, 2012

Policy Title: Purpose of the Board

Last Review: April 24, 2025

Policy Number: GOV-01

Year of Next Review: 2029

The Hastings Highlands Public Library Board is established to govern the affairs of the public library, serving the community's interests. This policy outlines the work of the board and the methods by which it pursues its mandate.

## Board Responsibilities

The board ensures the development and maintenance of a comprehensive and efficient public library by:

- Articulating the library's philosophy and values
- Defining the vision, mission, and priorities
- Evaluating outcomes of activities and services
- Setting governance and service policies
- Delegating authority to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and evaluating their performance
- Planning for future library development
- Securing resources needed for success
- Advocating for library service

The board governs effectively through:

- Representing community interests
- Engaging the community to ensure responsive and dynamic service
- Acting as a conduit between the library and the Municipal Council
- Collaborating with the CEO and the Municipal Council
- Setting an annual agenda reflecting current goals and strategic issues
- Proactive decision-making focused on the library's future in the community
- Evaluating board performance

## Section 1: Board Orientation

A thorough orientation for new board members is essential for a shared understanding of the board's authority and role.

- After appointment, each member receives a comprehensive orientation.
- The CEO and board chair are responsible for developing the orientation agenda, which includes:
  - Information on the library's vision, mission, and values
  - Overview of the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44
  - Board bylaws and governance policies
  - Discussion of board role, structure, code of conduct, and functions
  - Tour of the library and introduction to staff and services

Board members are provided with:

Current library policies

Library's planning document

Annual operating plan and current budget

Library membership application

Library Board Orientation Kit

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

## Section 2: Duties and Responsibilities of Board Members

Board members are expected to understand and appropriately exercise their authority.

- Members must actively participate in board duties.
- Duty of Diligence:
  - Stay informed on relevant legislation, bylaws, mission, vision, and values
  - Be aware of library activities, community events, and related issues
  - Attend meetings regularly and contribute productively
  - Prepare for meetings and use time effectively

Duty of Loyalty:

Comply with Municipal Conflict of Interest Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. M50

Prioritize library and community interests over personal or external interests

Uphold board decisions and resolutions with a unified voice

Positively represent the library to the public

Duty of Care:

Promote high-level library service

Consider information for decision-making

Share personal perspectives and respect others' opinions

Refrain from making decisions outside board meetings

Respect the boundaries between board and staff roles

Avoid directing the CEO or staff individually

Maintain confidentiality and comply with information laws

Resist censorship of library materials

## Section 3: Committees of the Board

Ad hoc committees may be utilized to advance board initiatives.

- Committees draft recommendations or alternatives for board consideration and report directly to the board.
- Committees operate for a defined period and a specific purpose, set in written terms of reference.
- They coordinate work, conduct research, and draft documents for board review and adoption.
- Membership may include non-board members.
- Committee meetings may be called by the chair or a majority of members.
- Committees do not supervise or direct staff.

### Terms of Reference

- Purpose: Ensure board policies meet Ontario Public Library Guidelines (OPLG)
- Responsibilities:
  - Audit and evaluate policies based on OPLG
  - Develop a work plan to review, revise, and create policies required by OPLG
  - Research, draft, and recommend new policies or revisions aligning with library's vision, mission, and strategic plan

Duration: The committee meets until policies comply with OPLG for accreditation purposes