

# FOR APPLICANTS TO THE **HANOVER PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD**



2019-2022 Term

Thank you for your interest in applying to become a Library Board Trustee.

The enclosed letter and materials include a brief description of the duties of a Trustee, to assist you in making your application.

Agnes Rivers-Moore, CEO/Chief Librarian, can provide more information about the position. Call 519.364.1402 or email [arm@hanover.ca](mailto:arm@hanover.ca).

Vicki McDonald, Administrative Assistant/Deputy Clerk can provide more information about the application process. Call 519.364.2780 x 1231 email [vmcdonald@hanover.ca](mailto:vmcdonald@hanover.ca).

General information about committees and boards is available at:  
[www.hanover.ca/boards-and-committees](http://www.hanover.ca/boards-and-committees)

Qualifications required:

- You must be a resident of the Town of Hanover.
- You must be a Canadian Citizen.
- You must be 18 years of age or older.
- You must not be employed by the Hanover Public Library or the Town.

This is the process of application and selection of board trustees:

- an ad is placed in The Post calling for applications to council boards and committees
- a fillable application form is available on the Town's website at <http://hanover.ca/library>
- application forms are also available at the Civic Centre offices or library
- resident appointments will be considered by the Mayor and approved by council

Please submit your application to Vicki McDonald, Administrative Assistant, Town of Hanover, by the closing date October 25, 2019, by 4:30 pm.

You may submit your application using the Submit button in the online form, or by emailing the completed form to [civic@hanover.ca](mailto:civic@hanover.ca), or by bringing the form to the Civic Centre (municipal office).



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Seeking new and passionate trustees

October 19 2018

The Hanover Public Library Board is seeking new and passionate trustees for the 2019-2022 term and is thrilled that you are thinking about being part of our committed team! To share in serving one of the most significant assets in our community is more than enough reward. Our library is a gatehouse for the full gamut of knowledge. The library expands our knowledge, introduces us to concepts, nourishes our wonder and dares our imagination. It welcomes, serves and benefits everyone.

As a trustee with the Hanover Public Library Board, you will become a well-informed advocate for our library and actively support efforts as we promote our library as a vital community hub and resource in the digital era. We are seeking new and passionate trustees to help us devise and execute our blueprint for the future. Attached in this package is a copy of our 2017 Annual Report, a succinct summary from the Ontario Library Association called "Choosing an Effective Public Library Board" and details on the process of applying to be a trustee.

*Quote - "After spending 4 years on the Hanover Public Library board I am now familiar with all that our library has to offer to the Town of Hanover. It promotes programmes for children, youth, adults and seniors. I already participated in the book sale and the card classes, but now I help with the Canadian Tire Plant sale and I attend many of the guest speaker sessions that are held at the Hanover Civic Centre. Strangers who walk in off the street can inquire about tourist information and they can sit down and use a computer if they need to do so as well. Our library is open to all."*

#### **Nuts and bolts of being a trustee**

As a trustee, you will serve a four-year term. Every year there are 10 monthly meetings, held on the fourth Thursday of the month at 6 pm and lasting for about 2 hours. At the beginning of the term, there is an election for Chair. Every trustee nominates to sit on usually 2 of the 4 Board committees: Finance, Personnel, Policy and Strategic Planning; each committee meets as needed for anything from 15 to 90 minutes per month, or may conduct its business by email. From time to time, there may also be an ad hoc committee established for a specific purpose (e.g. Art Gala fundraiser). You should set aside about 4-5 hours per month for meetings, "homework" and fundraising activities (e.g. plant sale, book sale etc). A set of policies direct our actions. Every trustee makes a personal undertaking to carry out our duties: regular attendance at Board and committee meetings, accepting the library budget, adopting and amending policies when required, strategic planning, evaluating the library's objectives and accomplishments, and obtaining acceptable funding. [www.hanover.ca/documents-library/public-library-board-minutes](http://www.hanover.ca/documents-library/public-library-board-minutes)

*Quote - "I only joined the Library Board in February 2018 to fill a casual vacancy to the end of the term this year. However, during that short period of time I have been amazed with the services that the library provides. It is a true privilege to be associated with the other trustees and library staff in our endeavours to continue the magnificent legacy that is the Hanover Public Library."*

#### **Partnerships and fundraising**

The library staff and Board consistently work with the community to support the needs of Hanover's residents. For example, we have partnered with the Saugeen Artists Guild, Canadian Tire and the Barons hockey team. Annually, some of the Barons, clad in their jerseys, read favourite books to delighted local children. The Saugeen Artists Guild collaborated with us in 2016 for the fundraising gala event *Art Under the Stars* where art works were purchased via a silent auction and we hope to have an

even more successful event on October 13 with *Art Beneath the Autumn Sky*. Trustees, staff and volunteers pitched in on the May long weekend at Canadian Tire for its plant sale. Earning \$1 for each hanging basket sold has enabled us to buy moveable bookshelves and colourful chairs for the children's area, transforming that space into a comfortable sitting area for story time. The library also participates in the Senior Games, the Sights and Sounds Festival and had a presence recently at the Hanover Raceway. The library communicates regularly with a column in *The Post* to inform the community of activities, materials and events that the library provides.

### **Fiscally responsible**

Our library shows fiscal responsibility by applying for grants and lobbying the province to increase annual funding. Our library applies for federal grants to hire summer students to extend children's events and programming at no cost to taxpayers. With another grant, we hired in 2017 a university student to implement technological tools and processes for the staff, freeing up more time to serve users. We also seek sponsorship from service clubs and businesses to support activities or purchase equipment, enhancing services beyond our municipal funding.

*Quote - "Being a member of the HPL board has given me an opportunity to meet many business supporters who live in our community. Their generosity is impressive and appreciated. Currently, I am excited to be involved in the 2018 library art gala. It is inspiring to know that the library has many volunteers who are willing to assist us in the various jobs required to put on an event of this magnitude."*

### **Social return on investment**

A recent study carried out by our CEO using the *Valuing Northern Libraries tool kit* found the 2017 social return on investment for our library was \$800 value to the community for every hour open. That is an \$8.86 return on each tax dollar the library receives. Total annual economic benefit in 2017 was \$4,648,404. Further, the tool kit showed \$497,899 annual value in cognitive and literacy development for children and youth. These figures are impressive and clearly demonstrate the effectiveness of the library as a resource that benefits our community.

### **Library Service Model and Space Needs Study**

The *Library Service Model and Space Needs Study*, a consultant's report dated December 2015 and presented to Hanover Municipal Council, canvassed, among other things, the options that should be considered in relation to providing more library space. At the time of the study, over 2,000 library items had to be stored in the Archive Section in the Hanover Civic Centre due to a lack of space. The study found that 'The space that was developed in the 1997 renovation and expansion for the library was a significant shortfall of the requirements even at that time.' The study highlighted that the library does not meet certain requirements under the *Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005*. In addition, staff have to deal with cramped space for training. As a trustee, you will be called on to advocate for an expansion of the library to address our limitations.

Link to Study: [hanoverlibrary.ca/wp-content/uploads/20151214-Hanover-Library-Report-Final-optimized.pdf](http://hanoverlibrary.ca/wp-content/uploads/20151214-Hanover-Library-Report-Final-optimized.pdf)

*Quote - "I have only lived in Hanover a short time. Being a trustee for the Hanover Public Library Board gave me the opportunity to serve my community, the library CEO and staff, and my fellow trustees. It has been an amazing experience to serve them and to learn about the people and history of this great community."*

### **Still interested in becoming a trustee?**

We certainly hope so!!

Please email our CEO, Agnes Rivers-Moore, for an application at [arm@hanover.ca](mailto:arm@hanover.ca) or speak with her on 519 364 1420 ext 1244

# What Makes an Effective Library Trustee?



## *Personal experience with library use*

Trustees need to understand the importance and place of libraries in our rapidly changing world.

*Ask yourself:* Have you been in our library recently? Perhaps you attended events, used the resources, or brought children to library activities? Have you heard from others what our library means to them?

## *Interest and commitment*

Trustees should have a commitment to the Library and to new services for our changing society. They must be interested in their community and in the diverse people the Library serves.

*Ask yourself:* Are you a keen supporter of libraries and their place in the community? Do you want to contribute to the future direction our library takes? Are you ready to work to advocate for the library service?

## *A good team member*

Trustees should be prepared to participate in the work and varied discussions of the Board.

*Ask yourself:* Do you enjoy attending team meetings, listening and contributing to a conversation, making and carrying forward group decisions?

Unanimous decisions may not always be possible, but once made, trustees need to support the decisions of the Board. Are you discreet, and loyal to the causes you believe in? Can you support your team even if you personally may disagree with the group's decision?

## *Available time*

Trustees need to be willing to dedicate sufficient time to accommodate the needs of Board responsibilities. A minimum commitment would be an average of two evening meetings a month and at least 10 hours per month. The time required would be to accommodate board meetings, to review the board package and other written communications throughout the month, and participate in committee work (in person or over email communications) and attend library programs and advocacy events.

*Ask yourself:* Can you find time to read and think about the reports, agendas and policies of our organization? Would you be able to commit, year round, to a meeting or two most months? (We have summer and December off.)

## *Variety of experience*

A balanced Board has members with a variety of personal, education, business, and community involvement backgrounds. You never know the value you can add to our work – unless you try it!

*Ask yourself:* What skills, experience, passion or talent would I bring to this board?

# Choosing An Effective Library Board

## The legal requirements

The Public Libraries Act and its Regulations, not the Municipal Act, outline the powers and duties of public library boards in Ontario.

Municipal Council is responsible for determining the composition of library boards and for appointing library board trustees immediately following municipal elections and when vacancies occur.

Public library board positions are for four years, concurrent with the term of Municipal Council. Public library boards can be composed of a minimum of five members. Although there is no maximum number, most municipalities have appointed boards of between seven and nine members.

Municipal Council can appoint its own members to the public library board, up to one less than 50% of the total number of library board members. The majority of a library board must be comprised of citizens appointed from the community. County Council has the option of appointing a bare majority of its Councillors.

An advertisement must appear in local newspapers soliciting applicants who are:

- At least 18 years old
- A Canadian citizen
- A resident of the municipality within which the library operates
- Not employed by the library or the municipality



## An effective public library board will

- Develop a Strategic Plan to establish goals and objectives for the library system
- Support ongoing professional development opportunities for its staff and its board members
- Ensure delivery of significant programs and services that reflect the diversity of the community
- Provide leadership through supporting the identification and development of emerging local programs
- Measure the impact of existing community programs and provide library resources and services that will enhance community results
- Present a budget to the Municipal Council that reflects the library's Strategic Plan and identified community needs
- Evaluate the performance of the library within the community and adjust its goals and objectives where the needs are not being met
- Ensure excellent management of the library on behalf of the community within the budget approved by the municipality



- Hire the library's Chief Executive Officer and evaluate their performance within the management goals set by the Board
- Ensure adherence to the Public Libraries Act, its Regulations, and any other legislation affecting the operation of the library within the community

### **The qualities needed in a trustee**

As a potential trustee, you should be:

- Interested in making a difference in the future success of your community
- Available to attend board and committee meetings and to come prepared to contribute to discussions and decisions
- Willing to become more aware of the bigger picture by learning about public library issues and concerns at both the provincial and the national levels
- Prepared to represent the interests, concerns, and attitudes of your community
- Open to learning about library programs and services that give your community the level of access to information and enrichment that it needs
- Enthusiastic about working with other board members and the Chief Executive Officer in a team process designed to provide programs and services that meet the greatest number of needs in your community

- Committed to being an active participant in Board leadership activities in your community

### **The selection process**

It is recommended that a municipality pass a bylaw to formalize selection procedures for:

- Advertising vacancies
- Requiring all candidates to attend a mandatory information session
- Developing criteria for selection of candidates
- Establishing a selection committee
- Developing a structured interview process.

Important considerations include:

- Consultation with the existing library board Chair and the Chief Executive Officer to determine the current needs of your community and gaps which may exist in the current board composition
- Developing a set of questions that all candidates will be asked during the interview to ensure fairness and meaningful comparison of candidates. Your library's Chief Executive Officer is a valuable resource for helping Council develop interview questions.

**For more information about effective library boards visit the Leadership by Design program on OLBA's web site.**

## **Contact Us**

### **Ontario Library Association**

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[www.accessola.com](http://www.accessola.com)

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# 10 Things You Need to Know as a New Library Board Member

## Understanding Public Library Board Governance in Ontario

Congratulations on being appointed to your local library board! During the next four years, you will participate in making many decisions that will shape public library service in your community for years to come.

You may not yet realize the importance or the scope of the role you've been asked to play, but with each board meeting you attend, you will come away with a better understanding of the library and the work involved in being an active board member. With a keen interest in the community, an open mind, and a willingness to learn, you are on your way to becoming a valuable board member who will contribute to informed decision-making that is in the best interest of the library.

Ontario residents rely on the public library to provide what they need to face the future with the resilience that comes from new knowledge, information, skills and abilities. It is not a stretch to say that your community cannot afford to be without good public library service.

Thank you for agreeing to contribute to your community in this important capacity!

For starters, here are 10 things you need to know as a new public library board member:

### 1. Public library service is free in the Province of Ontario.

The *Public Libraries Act (PLA)* and Regulation 976 specify that most library services must be offered to residents free of charge. This requirement makes the library different from other community services which are often expected to generate revenue from user fees. Access to library service must remain free because universal access to information is a fundamental human right and a cornerstone of democracy.

### 2. The library board is a governing board that gets its authority from the *Public Libraries Act*.

Once appointed by Council, the board is a separate, independent corporation with the legal duty to provide "a comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects the community's unique needs" (PLA, 20a).

### 3. The library board exercises its authority by making informed decisions that focus on matters of governance. Governance includes the following areas of responsibility:

- a. Strategy & oversight
- b. CEO support and oversight
- c. Financial stewardship & accountability
- d. Policy framework
- e. Advocacy based on mission and community impact
- f. Employer obligations.

- 4. The library board is required by legislation to appoint a chief executive officer (CEO) to oversee library operations.** Once appointed by the Board, the CEO manages and controls library operations, freeing the library board to focus on governance. This is an important distinction for everyone to understand as it prevents conflicts and other problems from occurring.
- 5. Board authority belongs to the board as a whole; individual board members have no authority.** The board exercises its authority through the decisions it makes, and records as motions, in the context of a legally constituted board meeting. Outside of board meetings, you as a board member have no individual authority.
- 6. Each board member has a legal obligation to act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interests of the library.** Because the *PLA* establishes the library board as a corporation, it means board members have a "fiduciary" duty to act in the best interests of the corporation. There is a duty of care and of loyalty, and an obligation to act honestly and in good faith. This includes all board members, whether appointed as a citizen representative or a council representative.
- 7. Library board meetings must be open to the public with advance notice given.** The board is required to hold regular meetings once a month for at least 10 months of the year. Board meetings must be open to the public unless a closed meeting is warranted, as prescribed in Section 16.1 (4) of the *Public Libraries Act*.
- 8. Good governance happens when the CEO and library board trust each other, respect each other, and work together.** The library board relies on the support and expertise of the CEO to be successful; and the CEO relies on the support and guidance of the library board to be successful.
- 9. Good governance happens in board meetings that are designed to support informed decision-making.** The board chair and CEO work together to create agendas that are engaging and forward thinking while also meeting the board's needs for accountability and wise stewardship. It's a process that takes time, but the best boards eventually find a collaborative style that balances camaraderie with candor and challenging conversations.
- 10. The municipality is the library's primary funder and a strategic ally.** While the library board is an independent corporation, it does get the majority of its funding from municipal tax dollars. Sustaining a collaborative mindset and a strong working relationship between the library and the municipality is, therefore, important work. Council representatives on the library board support this work by facilitating ongoing communication and opportunities for collaboration. It is important that everyone understands that elected officials appointed to the library board have the same responsibilities and obligations as any other member of the board.

These 10 statements constitute an overview of the most important aspects of library board governance in the province of Ontario. Each of the statements represents an important governance concept or an environmental factor that is crucial for board members to understand. Collectively, the statements are important because they contribute to effective library boards and successful libraries. There is an online version with more explanation for each of the 10 points, as well as links to other useful resources. For more information, email: [consulting@sols.org](mailto:consulting@sols.org) or [skills@olsn.ca](mailto:skills@olsn.ca).