

Background

The Oxford County Library (OCL) system operates 14 branch libraries within the County of Oxford. The Oxford County Library Board, hereafter referred to as the Board, was established by By-law #1781 as amended by By-law #5379-2012, in accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P44.

Purpose / Mandate

The Board is responsible for overall governance of the Oxford County Library.

The Board's purpose is to set a strategic framework within which it can manage the provision of comprehensive and efficient public library services to participating municipalities that reflect Oxford County's unique needs.

The Board's approach to undertaking this purpose will be in accordance with the *Public Libraries Act* and as further defined by Oxford County By-laws / Resolutions, all applicable legislation and Board policies.

Responsibilities

The Board works within the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P44. The Board establishes policies to direct the operations of the Oxford County Library, in accordance with its purpose. The Board employs a Chief Executive Officer/Chief Librarian, who in turn administers the library under the guidance of those policies.

It is the fiduciary responsibility of the Board to act honestly, in good faith and in the best interests of the library.

The following duties and responsibilities are as outlined in the *Oxford County Library Board Governance Policy Manual* (Motion #: 2022-04):

- As the body that bears legal responsibilities for the Oxford County Library, the Board shall have the following governance responsibilities:
 1. Build and maintain a solid framework for the library's operations
 2. Define the overall direction and results to be accomplished by the system
 3. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive Officer in a clear and safe manner
 4. Serve as a bridge between the library and the Council and between the library and the community
 5. Evaluate the results achieved by the system
 6. Demonstrate accountability to key stakeholders
- Other Board responsibilities include:
 1. Determine and adopt written policies to govern the operation of the library;
 2. Understand the library-related needs of the community;
 3. Determine and adopt an annual Business Plan;
 4. Appoint a qualified Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Secretary and Treasurer;

5. Ensure a strong, stable framework is in place that clearly shows how authority is delegated to the CEO;
6. Provide for the annual evaluation of the CEO;
7. Measure whether the programs and activities used to achieve goals and objectives have achieved the intended results annually;
8. Ensure that the necessary resources are available to achieve intended results;
9. Evaluate the board regularly;
10. Ensure that the library is operated in accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, chapter P44.

Membership

The Board shall consist of 7 persons appointed by Council of the County of Oxford of whom not more than 2 shall be members of the said Council and the remainder of whom shall be citizen appointees.

Membership Qualifications:

In accordance with the provisions of the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 10, “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 or a permanent resident of Canada within the meaning of the *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (Canada);
- (c) is,
 - (i) ... a resident of one of the participating municipalities in the case of a county library board...
- (d) is not employed by the board or by the municipality or county ... R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 10 (1); 2002, c. 18, Sched. F, s. 3 (9); 2019, c. 14, Sched. 12, s. 1.”

Resignations/Vacancies:

“Where a vacancy arises in the membership of a board, the appointing council shall promptly appoint a person to fill the vacancy and to hold office for the unexpired term, except where the unexpired term is less than forty-five days.” *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 12.

Disqualification:

In accordance with the provisions of the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 13, a Board member may be disqualified if said member:

- “(a) is convicted of an indictable offence;
- (b) becomes incapacitated;
- (c) is absent from the meetings of the board for three consecutive months without being authorized by a board resolution;

- (d) ceases to be qualified for membership under clause 10 (1) (c); or
- (e) otherwise forfeits his or her seat,

the member's seat becomes vacant and the remaining members shall forthwith declare the seat vacant and notify the appointing council accordingly.”

Essential Competencies & Qualifications

- Commitment to equitable access, diversity and inclusiveness;
- Ability to seek and listen to input from all stakeholders and approach people and problems with an open mind;
- Ability to actively participate in discussion and deliberation and to attain positive outcomes;
- Leadership experience;
- Time and energy to devote to the work of the Board;
- Belief that the public library provides a unique and essential service to the residents of Oxford County;
- Aptitude for long- and short-range planning;
- Experience or interest in community development and engagement;
- Commitment to Intellectual Freedom;
- Skilled in one or more of the following would be considered an asset: media relations, advocacy, fundraising, business and financial management, strategic planning and policy development.

Term

A Library Board member shall hold office for a term concurrent with the term of the appointing council, or until a successor is appointed.

Time Commitment

The Board will meet a minimum of seven regular meetings each year, as described in section 16 of the *Public Libraries Act*.

In accordance with the *County of Oxford Procedure By-law No. 6268-2020* section 3.8.5, the Board shall provide members the option to meet both in person and virtually through a hybrid meeting system. Hybrid meetings allow the most flexibility to members and will be live streamed and recorded for access to the public.

Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Board may be required. Said meetings may be called by the Board Chair or any two members of the Board, with information on the specific purpose of the meeting and reasonable notice given to members in writing.

Attendance at Meetings

Regular attendance of all Board members to meetings is vital to the satisfactory conduct of Board business. In the event that a member must be absent from any meeting, said member shall notify the Board Chair and/or Secretary prior to the day of the meeting.

A Board member who is absent from three consecutive meetings without authorization by board resolution shall be removed / disqualified from the Board.

Rules of Procedure

The Board shall follow all rules and regulations found in the *County of Oxford Procedure By-law No. 6268-2020*, in accordance with section 2.2.

Inaugural Meeting of the Library Board

In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 14(1) the Chief Executive Officer shall call the inaugural meeting of the Oxford County Library Board at the start of each new term upon receipt of the confirmation of appointments.

Meetings

In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 16.1(2) all meetings of the Board are open to the public.

Closed Session

A meeting or part of a meeting may be closed to the public when dealing with information about an identifiable individual as specified in the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (MFIPPA) or other subject matter as outlined in R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 16.1 (4). The Board shall follow all rules and procedures found in the *County of Oxford Procedure By-law No. 6268-2020*, in accordance with section 12.2 to 12.8.

Officers of the Board:

Board Chair

1. In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, R.S.O. 1990, c. P44 s. 14(3), a board shall elect one of its members as chair at its first meeting in a new term.
2. The term of office for the chair of the Oxford County Library shall be for one year. The Chair may be reappointed.
3. In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 14(4), the board, in the absence of the chair, may appoint an acting chair. See Section 2: Terms of Reference of the Vice Chair.
4. The chair leads the board, acts as an official representative of the library, ensures the proper functioning of the board and the proper conduct of board business, in accordance with appropriate legislation and prescribed rules of procedure adopted by the board.
5. The chair will:
 - a) preside at regular and special meetings of the board
 - b) set the agenda in consultation with the CEO
 - c) ensure that business is dealt with expeditiously and help the board work as a team
 - d) coordinate the board's evaluation process

- e) represent the board, alone or with other members of the board, at any public or private meetings for the purpose of conducting, promoting or completing the business of the board
- f) not commit the board to any course of action in the absence of the specific authority of the board.

Vice-Chair

1. The election of the vice-chair shall take place at the first meeting in each calendar year for the term of one year or the end of the term of the board, whichever comes first.
2. The vice-chair will be acting chair for the duration of the absence of the chair.

Secretary

1. The Chief Executive Officer serves as secretary of the board, as permitted by the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 15(5).
2. The secretary acts as the record-keeper to the board.
3. The Chief Executive Officer may delegate responsibilities of the position to the Deputy Clerk.
4. In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 15(3), the secretary will:
 - a) Conduct the board's official correspondence
 - b) Keep minutes of every meeting of the board
5. In addition, the secretary will:
 - a) prepare the agenda prior to each board meeting, in cooperation with the CEO and chair
 - b) distribute the agenda, with all reports and enclosures, to all board members prior to the relevant board meeting
 - c) distribute the minutes to all board members not less than 48 hours prior to the next board meeting.

Treasurer

1. The County Treasurer serves as treasurer to the board, as allowed by the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 15(4).
2. The treasurer shall monitor the financial activities of the library and shall ensure that complete and accurate records are kept in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices.
3. In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 14(4), the treasurer will:
 - a) Receive and account for all the board's money
 - b) Open an account or accounts in the name of the board in a chartered bank, trust company or credit union approved by the board
 - c) Deposit all money received on the board's behalf to the credit of that account or accounts
 - d) Disburse the money as the board directs.

4. The treasurer will provide the board with a report of the financial position of the library, monthly or as otherwise required.

Chief Executive Officer (CEO)

1. In accordance with the *Public Libraries Act*, s. 15(2), the Oxford County Library Board appoints the CEO, who shall attend all board meetings and meetings of any committees of the board.
2. The board delegates the authority for management and operations of services to the CEO.
3. As an officer of the board, the CEO:
 - a) does not vote on board business
 - b) identifies community needs and concerns
 - c) identifies, supports and facilitates strategic planning and future direction of the library
 - d) supports and facilitates planning and delivery of services
 - e) recommends policies
 - f) provides general supervision over the direction of the operations of the library and its staff.

Compensation and Expenses

Committee members will receive remuneration as per the policies of the County of Oxford, as amended from time to time and shall be reimbursed by the County for County business related expenses incurred, payable in accordance with Employee Expense Policy No. 6.02.

Half-day meeting or less	Full-day meeting
\$100	\$175
Compensation applies to Lay Member Appointees only	

Education

Board orientation, training, development and evaluation are covered under the *Oxford County Library Board Governance Policy Manual* (Motion #: 2022-04)

Further training opportunities by the *Ontario Library Boards' Association* and the *Ontario Library Service* will be made available.

Achievements / Accomplishments 2018-2022

At the end of each term, the Board drafts a Library Board Legacy Document that is included in the Oxford County Library Board Orientation Manual for incoming Library Board members.

While the Legacy document will not be finalized until the end of the Board term, below are some highlights of the 2019-2022 Library Board accomplishments:

- Adoption of a COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery Plan
- 2019 Mobile Outreach Pilot Project and ongoing funding for the **Ox on the Run** outreach service.
- Implementation of Library RFID Technology
- Receipt of a Canada Healthy Communities Grant for the Tillsonburg Outdoor Learning Classroom project.
- Recruitment of a new CEO/Chief Librarian in 2022

Additional Information

Oxford County Library Board Governance Policy Manual (Motion #: 2022-04) includes information on the following areas of board governance:

- Planning
- Delegation of Authority to the CEO/Chief Librarian
- Advocacy
- Policy Development
- Succession Planning
- Code of Conduct
- Board Orientation
- Advisory Committees / Friends of the Library
- Board Training and Development
- Annual Board Evaluation
- Board Duties and Responsibilities
- CEO Performance Appraisal
- Board Committees
- Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act