

Section	Governance & Administration	Section #:	1
Sub-section	Organization of the Board	Sub-section #:	1.1
Topic	Board Code of Conduct	Policy:	1.1.6

Preamble

Board members have been entrusted with caring for the Selwyn Public Library system and must be seen to serve Library users and their community with truth, integrity, respect and diligence. This commitment includes respect for others, proper decorum, the appropriate use of authority, and maintenance of political neutrality while conducting Board duties. The Selwyn Public Library Board is accountable for the implementation of this policy.

As such:

Respect

Board members will fulfill their responsibilities in ensuring that the Library is free from discrimination and harassment and shall encourage and respect diversity of viewpoints and skills. Members will operate 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.

No Member shall:

- a) Speak disrespectfully of any member of the Board, staff or volunteer team.
- b) Use offensive words in Board meetings or against any Member.
- c) Abuse, bully, or intimidate others in the course of their duties.
- d) 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.

Privacy and Confidential Information

Members will respect the privacy of others, as outlined in Privacy and Access to Information 4.1.3 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. Members will only disclose confidential information if required by law or authorized to do so by the Board.

Appropriate Decorum in Public Settings

Members will honor the Board Procedure By-Laws 1.1.3 and Responsibilities of Board Members Policy 1.1.4 at Board meetings, by respecting the agenda and following rules of order.

With the understanding that Library Board meetings are public and that their behavior affects the image of the Selwyn Public Library, Board members shall:

- a) Speak only to the topic at hand.
- b) Abide by 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.
- c) Act in the interests of the Library members and the community it serves, over and above other interest group involvement, membership on other boards or personal interests. Council members who sit on the Library Board will act in the interests of the Library Board during Board meetings.
- d) Express individual viewpoints but work harmoniously with the Board toward consensus as much as possible.
- e) Speak with “one voice” once a decision is reached and a resolution is passed by the Board.
- f) Assume no authority to make decisions, or communicate with the public, unless specifically authorized by the Board.

Individual Responsibility

Board members are expected to maintain a reasonable standard of personal integrity. Board members shall:

- a) Attend Board meetings regularly and inform CEO/Chief Librarian and Board Chair about expected absences before meetings.
- b) Be prepared for all Board and committee meetings and use meeting time productively.
- c) Take personal responsibility for professional development through continuing educational opportunities and participation in regional and provincial Library organizations.
- d) Participate in the annual Board self-evaluation process.

Proper Use of Authority

Use of Influence

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. Members will not use their positions at the Library to improperly influence others for private gain or to gain preferential treatment for their family, friends or organizations with which their members are associated.

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:

Small gifts (cards or edibles, such as chocolates or cookies)

Advertising material (calendars, scratch pads, pens, t-shirts)

Any hospitality or gift that has a monetary value under \$100

Improper influence can be unintentional. Due to the position that a Board member holds, staff may acquiesce to a Member's request even if the request is inappropriate. Therefore, Members should avoid requesting staff to perform activities other than those required in the performance of their duties, such as running personal errands or performing personal tasks.

Board members are not eligible for volunteer positions within the Library branches and/or new-to-you stores while serving on the Library Board.

Board members will withdraw from the Library Board if seeking employment with the Library or the Township of Selwyn.

Political Neutrality

Using Library resources, or events, for political purposes undermines the perception of the Library as an institution that supports intellectual freedom and serves all citizens equally. Members will not use Library facilities, equipment, supplies, services (including staff services) or any other resources for election campaign or campaign-related activities.

Members will not use a position of authority at the Library to compel staff or volunteers to engage in partisan political activities.

Complaints Procedure

Complaints against an individual Board member or the Library Board as a whole, will be directed to the CEO/Chief Librarian.

Related Documents

Privacy and Access to Information 4.1.3
 Board Procedure By-Laws 1.1.3
 Responsibilities of Board Members Policy 1.1.4
 Municipal Conflict of Interest Act

Attachments: Board Member Complaint Form

History:			
Date of Original Board Motion:		Motion #	2021.016
Date of Amendments: (if any)			2023.036
Date of Next Review:	Oct 2027		