

## MEMO / NOTE DE SERVICE

**To / Destinataire** OPLB Trustees

**cc:** Library Senior Management Team

**From / Expéditeur** Alexandra Yarrow, Program Manager, Board and Strategic Services

**Subject / Objet** 2023 OPL Board Meeting Evaluation      **Date:** March 28, 2024  
 Questionnaire Results

As per OPLB Policy 015 – Board Evaluations and Governance, Ottawa Public Library (“OPL” or “the Library”) staff conduct an annual questionnaire regarding the general structure and functioning of OPL Board (“the Board”) meetings (the text of which is derived from Appendix A of the Board Evaluations and Governance Policy, the Meeting Evaluation Form), as well as a biennial questionnaire assessing a broad range of Board performance dimensions reflecting governance best practices (the text of which is derived from Appendix B, the OPL Board Performance Evaluation Form). The purpose of this memo is to provide members with a summary of responses to the annual questionnaire regarding Board meetings, which was conducted in November-December 2023.

### Context

The annual questionnaire is undertaken to “consider potential improvements to the meeting’s processes and support materials; the adequacy and effectiveness of presentations received at the meeting; and any other topics that would contribute to the effectiveness of the Board.” The questions solicit trustee feedback regarding various aspects of meetings including the venue, structure, materials, and refreshments.

### 2023 Questionnaire Responses

- Eight (8) trustees completed the questionnaire for a response rate of 88%;
- Of the 23 questions asked, most received responses of 4 (satisfied) and 5 (very satisfied);<sup>1</sup>
- Trustees were generally satisfied with Board meetings, noting particularly that meetings were well organized and topical; reports and presentations facilitates discussions at policy and strategic levels in keeping with the governance model of the Board;
- Trustees also noted members are engaged and productive through their work and guidance on Ad hoc Committees;

<sup>1</sup> Responses were provided using a five or six-point rating scale in which 1 indicated “very dissatisfied,” 5 indicated “very satisfied” and 6 indicated N/A for select questions.

- Five (5) questions (22%) received at least one dissatisfied rating; these questions related to the cloud storage tool (respondents commented that they experienced authentication issues), catering (respondents commented on quality and variety, and expressed a desire for take-away), Ad hoc Committee materials (respondents commented that all documents should be available in advance of the meeting), meeting reports (one respondent expressed concerns about the completeness of information in some reports), and the Chief Librarian/CEO performance evaluation process;
- Respondents were provided an opportunity to elaborate on their rankings:
  - Positive feedback included:
    - Successful and well-organized orientation session and workshops;
    - Ability to provide fulfilling strategic input via Ad hoc Committee work;
    - The ability to make informed decisions based on high-quality staff reports; and,
    - Respectful interactions between the Chair and public delegations.
  - Areas of concern included:
    - Access to the Zoom webinar; and,
    - Timely receipt of information to the Board for discussion in committees.

## **Recommendations**

Staff have three recommendations based on the questionnaire results:

1. Work with staff to ensure committee documents are available within a reasonable timeframe for trustees to review before Ad hoc meetings;
2. Individual follow-up regarding cloud storage and webinar issues; and,
3. Explore other options for catering.

## **Next steps**

- Staff will work with the Governance Ad hoc Committee to implement the recommendations above; and,
- The next annual questionnaire will be issued following the final meeting of the 2024 calendar year.

Alexandra Yarrow

Program Manager, Board & Strategic Services / Gestionnaire de programme, Conseil d'administration & services stratégiques

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