

004 - OPLB Trustee Conduct

Code of Conduct Guiding Principles

A Code of Conduct is a key instrument, set by those in leadership positions in an organization, for establishing the boundaries of acceptable behaviour. This policy defines the expectations for the conduct of Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Board Trustees.

The Board believes that Trustees are held to a high standard of behaviour in all aspects of their conduct at all times, and must fulfil their duties in a way that maintains and enhances public confidence and trust in the Library.

The Board commits itself and its members to ethical, business-like, and lawful conduct, including the proper use of authority, and appropriate decorum when acting as Board members.

Trustees act only as part of the Board, the legal entity. Individual Trustees cannot act alone or on behalf of the Board unless specifically given the authority to do so by the Board.

Board members are encouraged to use and visit OPL facilities during open hours. Trustees will receive the same level of treatment from staff as would any other member of the public, according Trustees the same privileges and responsibilities as those accorded the general public.

The Code of Conduct

In order to build efficient and effective relationships, Trustees commit to behaviours and communications that build mutual respect and trust. Accordingly, Trustees will:

- exercise honesty in all communication by sharing personal concerns, interests, and issues openly, and avoiding surprises by communicating in a timely manner.
- demonstrate respect for each other, OPL employees and volunteers, and members of the public, as well as decisions of the Board;
- share information and knowledge which contributes constructively to Board work;
- maintain confidentiality on issues not yet resolved by the Board or on other information identified as confidential by the CEO;
- focus on issues, not personalities, keeping shared goals in mind;
- build and maintain trust;
- withhold judgment on issues until fully informed and discussed;
- seek to understand and be understood;

- use in-camera sessions appropriately and judiciously and respect and maintain confidential in-camera matters reviewed, deliberations, and decisions;
- assume a non-defensive posture, taking the initiative to communicate and ask questions for clarification; and,
- make every reasonable effort to protect the integrity and promote the positive image of the Library, the Library Board, and each other.

Trustees shall not:

- seek to embarrass each other or the Library;
- intentionally mislead or misinform each other; nor,
- maintain hidden agendas.

Board members may not attempt to exercise individual authority over the organization and more specifically:

- Trustee interactions with the CEO or staff must recognize that Board authority is not vested in any individual, except when explicitly authorized by the Board; and,
- Trustee interactions with the public, press, or other entities must recognize the same limitation and Board members may not speak for the Board except to repeat explicitly-stated Board decisions.

Conflict of Interest

Trustees are required to adhere to the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act.

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| Effective Date: | Last Review Date: |
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