

WHAT MAKES A GOOD LIBRARY BOARD MEMBER?

A passion for libraries! Board members typically represent all segments of the community, such as seniors, parents, business entrepreneurs, and educators.

FAVOURABLE SKILLS + CHARACTERISTICS

- Open-minded
- Works well with others
- Listener
- Time to commit
- Personally involved in the community
- Able to talk to community members
- Knows community issues
- Passion for libraries and their role in the community
- Understands library customers and their needs
- Has creative ideas for making the library better

WHAT TO DO BEFORE YOU BECOME A LIBRARY BOARD MEMBER

- Get to know your library
- Understand municipal processes
- Know the complexities of running a library



SHAPE OUR FUTURE

BECOMING A ST. THOMAS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEMBER

Library Board Information
& Frequently Asked Questions

For more information, contact:

Heather Robinson, CEO

153 Curtis Street

St. Thomas, ON N5P 3Z7

519-631-6050

hrobinson@stthomaspubliclibrary.ca



WHAT DOES THE LIBRARY BOARD DO?

A Library Board is created under a provincial law - called the Public Libraries Act - and the Act says that the library board's role is:

- to act as a spokesperson in support of the library
- to develop a budget and monitor expenses
- to hire, supervise, and evaluate a CEO
- to develop the policies required for the operation of the library

The Board is a governance board, so they ensure the budget is approved, monitor expenditures, and review and approve policies.

The Board is not involved in the day to day operations of the library, except to set the overall budget and policies.

HOW OFTEN DOES THE BOARD MEET?

As a whole, the Board meets 10 times a year, every month except July and August. In addition there are committees of the Board - a Finance Committee, a Personnel Committee, and a Public Relations and Fundraising Committee and they may meet 3 or 4 times per year.

WHO SITS ON THE BOARD?

The Board has nine members - two City Councillors, up to three members recommended by the School Boards, and four volunteer members from the community. All members are appointed by City Council.

HOW DO I GET ON THE BOARD?

All the members are appointed to the Board after a municipal election (usually October). In November, the City places an ad in the newspaper, asking for applications for all its local and community Boards including the hospital, the police board, or the library board. Vacancies may also arise following a resignation of a board member.

All Board members have to live in the City of St. Thomas, be Canadian citizens, and be over 18.

HOW MUCH ARE BOARD MEMBERS PAID?

Board members are volunteers, and the only payment they receive is reimbursement of expenses on Board-related business. For example, a board member may attend an out-of-town library meeting, library conference, or workshop with expenses paid by the library.

WHERE DOES THE LIBRARY GET MONEY FROM?

The City of St. Thomas supports the majority of the Library's expenses. Other sources of revenue are government grants, donations, fees and fines.

HOW DOES THE BOARD KNOW IT'S DOING A GOOD JOB?

Every four or five years, during a strategic planning process, we meet with the public to make sure that the Board sets a plan for the library that meets community needs. The development of this plan is one of the most important functions of the Board. Our annual report to the community measures our success in terms of numbers and community impact.