

## **Advocacy Policy**

### **Purpose**

This policy defines how advocacy will be planned and carried out by the Lake of Bays Township Public Library (the Library).

### **Policy**

Advocacy is an ongoing activity which lays the foundation for awareness and understanding of the importance of the Library.

This policy applies to the Library Board (the Board), the CEO, Branch Librarian, and any other staff who are authorized by the CEO to advocate on behalf of the Library.

The Board will ensure that plans for advocacy form an important part of its Strategic Planning which is an 'evergreen process' renewed frequently on rolling 5-year planning periods. Advocacy activities will be an important element within the priorities developed through the Strategic Planning process.

### **Procedures:**

- CEO will provide reports using a variety of information so decisions for advocacy can be made with evidenced based data. The Library will thereby increase its understanding of the needs and desires of patrons, supporters and the community by using such tools as surveys and focus groups so that future efforts are based on identified needs.
- The Board or CEO will decide on a case-by-case basis who will be the designated spokesperson for the Library on any given initiative or issue. This may be either or both Board or staff members.
- The Board will include advocacy training for Board and staff in.

### **Relationships:**

#### **With Government:**

- The CEO will keep the Board apprised of policy and legislative initiatives at all levels of government that could have impacts on the Library. And the Board will determine, on the advice of the CEO, the appropriate response, if any, to be made on a case by case basis. Further, the Board may undertake lobbying activities related to these policies.

The Board and Staff will:

- Advocate carefully to build relationships with decision-makers, primarily Township Councillors and senior Township staff.
- Be an effective advocate for the provision of good Library service by ensuring that the community is aware of the importance of the Library and that government decision-makers at all levels fully understand the pivotal role played by the Library in the community.
- Work toward having a 'voice at the table' to be part of the process when problems are identified, solutions proposed, programs and funding for the community are discussed and decisions made.
- See lobbying as an effective means of persuading government to resolve a decision, policy or law in favour of the Library.
- Meet at least annually with Township Council to review the Library's resources, services, plans and achievements.
- Be sensitive to Township and other government priorities while advocating strongly for Library interests.

**With Stakeholders:**

The Board and Staff will:

- Develop relations with key stakeholders and supporters/champions and will participate in activities that optimize these relationships and engage these groups in creative problem solving and decision making processes.
- Work toward a consistent and coordinated response to issues from the Library, the Friends of the Library and other supporting groups.
- Collaborate with organizations such as the Friends of the Library in fundraising activities.
- Will support special events held by the Library such as Public Library Week and hold such events themselves such as volunteer recognition.
- Will coordinate with other libraries and organizations to support the advocacy initiatives of the Library.

**With The Community and Media:**

The Board and Staff will:

- Ensure that the Library regularly participates in community activities aimed at increasing community awareness of the variety and importance of public library services.
- Communicate with the-media focussing on issues of current relevance while also emphasizing the library's relevance; that it is important to have a library;

and that the Library is a vital part of the community's infrastructure and future.

- Communicate the unique benefits of the library to the community in one positive and consistent voice, and in an informed manner.

Approved: June 27<sup>th</sup> 2016

Review: June 2020

Signature of the Chairperson \_\_\_\_\_