



SUBJECT: BOARD - ADVOCACY POLICY

Policy No: B-2021-04

Date: February 16, 2021

Review Date: February 2025

Pages: 3

PURPOSE

This policy provides guidance for Innisfil ideaLAB & Library staff and Library Board in regards to advocacy activities on the Library's behalf.

POLICY

Application

This policy applies to the Library Board, the CEO or any other staff members who are authorized by the CEO to advocate on behalf of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library.

General

Public libraries provide tremendous value and play an essential role in promoting all forms of literacy. Libraries assist individuals to overcome barriers that limit participation in the economy and society. Public library promotion and advocacy is a critical role for all staff and Board members.

The Innisfil Public Library Board shall 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. Advocacy is an ongoing activity, which lays the foundation for specific lobbying campaigns, should they become necessary. Lobbying may be necessary as a means of working to persuade the government to resolve a decision, policy or law in favour of the Library(ies).

Guidelines

Advocacy Role

The Library Board shall:

- Fulfill its advocacy responsibilities by identifying and responding to issues, concerns and government policies that may directly or indirectly affect the Innisfil Public Library.
- Encourage Board members, advisors, committee members, staff, volunteers, stakeholder organizations, concerned individuals and other community or professional organizations to bring advocacy issues to the Board's attention.

- Share stories and relevant information about library programs, services and impact;
- Sharing information about the Board's values, vision and strategic plans;
- Be an ambassador for Innisfil ideaLAB & Library and advocate consistent with the policy;
- When requested, assist the Board Chair in officially representing the Library at meetings or other events;
- Respect the confidentiality appropriate to issues of a sensitive nature and understand the Chair's role to represent and speak on behalf of the Board;
- If contacted by the media, coordinate with the Board Chair and CEO to ensure appropriate information is shared.

Issues Response

- After discussion of the advocacy issue(s), the Library Board shall direct the Board Chair or the CEO/Chief Librarian to convey its concerns in person or in writing to the appropriate organization or government agency, and to the media where appropriate.
- The Board may convey its decision to the general public and to the Library membership and customers in an appropriate manner.
- The Board shall advise government officials on the impact of current and proposed policies.
- The Board may, at its discretion and by duly approved motion, undertake appropriate lobbying activities in support of or in opposition to these issues.

Library Spokesperson

- The Library Board Chair (or designate) or the CEO/Chief Librarian (or designate(s)), will be the official spokesperson(s) for the Library on advocacy issues, depending upon availability and the nature of the issue.
- The CEO speaks on behalf of the Library in matters related to the operation and procedures of the Library and may speak on behalf of the Board in cooperation with the Board Chair.
- The CEO identifies and maintains effective relationships with appropriate stakeholders and is responsible for ensuring procedures are in place to support effective coordination with media.

Coordination with Stakeholder Organizations

- The Board will make every reasonable effort to ensure that there is a consistent and coordinated response to advocacy issues from the Board and the Friends of the Library.

Relations with the Municipality

- The Board shall ensure that there are regular communications with the Town Council and Senior Administration.
- The Board shall meet at least annually with Council to review the Library's resources, services, plans and achievements.

Relations with Other Organizations

- To be an effective advocate, the Library shall communicate, co-operate, and co-ordinate with other libraries, organizations, agencies and institutions when and as appropriate.

Community Awareness

- The Board shall ensure that the Library regularly participates in activities aimed at increasing community awareness of the variety and importance of public library services.

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, February 16, 2021,
Motion Number: 2021.16

Supersedes Policy #B-2017-05, approved February 21, 2017, Motion #2017.18 &
Policy #B-2012-09, approved June 18, 2012, Motion #2012.48; &
Policy #2009-02, approved February 17, 2009, Motion #2009.13; &
Policy #2006-03, approved January 16, 2006, Motion #2006.09.