



Information Package for Prospective Library Trustees

Surrey Libraries Administration Office

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Do you want to be more involved in your community? Becoming a Library Trustee with the Surrey Libraries can be a rewarding way to help shape this valued community service. This package offers information about Surrey Libraries, the role of the Board of Trustees and how to become involved.

Surrey is a diverse community where 102 different languages are spoken and a third of the population is under the age of 19. To put that into perspective, Surrey has more young people than the entire population of Delta. Surrey is a growing community with around 1,000 new residents arriving each month and Surrey Libraries is working hard to meet that growing demand.

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The Role of the Board

The Library Board is made up of volunteers who are appointed by Surrey City Council as outlined in the B.C. Library Act. Each volunteer's initial two-year appointment may be renewed up to three additional terms for a total of eight years.

The Board represents the citizens of Surrey and oversees the governance of the Library by enacting policies directing the work of the organization. The Board delegates operational responsibility to the Chief Librarian and communication between the Board and staff is carried out through the Chief Librarian.

The Board's principal duties fall into six main categories:

- **Strategic Planning** – defining the Library's values and setting out its mission and vision from time to time
- **Financial oversight** – ensuring financial responsibility and accountability of the Library by:
 - Approving the annual budget and overseeing financial reports and controls
 - Contracting for an independent audit and reviewing the audit report
- **Chief Librarian** – selecting, evaluating, and coaching the Chief Librarian
- **Oversight** – ensuring the operations of the Library support the set mission and vision and in particular:
 - helping to develop a literate and learning community
 - supporting intellectual freedom
 - ensuring equitable access to a wide range of resources
 - ensuring that library programs and services meet the needs of Surrey citizens
- **Advocacy and Fund Raising** – advocating for the Library in the community and with government and assisting in the identification, cultivation, and solicitation of prospective major supporters
- **Board Effectiveness** – regularly assessing the Board's effectiveness by ensuring diligent attention to attendance and participation of its own membership, freedom from conflict of interest, and adherence to a code of ethics.

The Library Board meets 8 times a year. Attendance at library special events and community events is part of the time commitment made by Board members.

What Makes for an Effective Library Trustee?

Personal experience with library use

Trustees need to understand the importance and place of libraries in our rapidly changing world.

Interest and commitment

Trustees should have a commitment to the Library and to new services for our changing society. They must be interested in their community and in the diverse people the Library serves.

Available time

Trustees need to be willing to dedicate sufficient time to accommodate the needs of Board responsibilities. A minimum commitment would be an average of one evening meeting a month and at least 10 hours per month. The time required would be to accommodate board meetings, to review the board package and other written communications throughout the month, and participate in committee work (in person or over email communications) and attend library programs and advocacy events.

A good team member

Trustees should be prepared to participate in the work and varied discussions of the Board. Unanimous decisions may not always be possible, but once made, trustees need to support the decisions of the Board.

Variety of experience

A balanced Board has members with a variety of personal, education, business, and community involvement backgrounds.

Detailed Job Description

The Library Board has the legal responsibility for oversight of the delivery of public library services in Surrey.

Responsibilities:

- Adopt written policies to govern the operations, services, and programs of the Library.
- Hire a Chief Librarian to oversee management and day-to-day operations, and evaluate their performance.
- Participate in the strategic planning process.
- Prepare and submit an annual budget to Council.

Duties:

- Regularly attend and participate in meetings of the Board and committees.
- Request information to ensure that issues are understood and decisions are well-informed.
- Understand the Library’s vision, mission, values, policies, and services.
- Attend special events and represent the Library at community functions.
- Advocate for the Library in the community and represent the community to the Library.
- Advocate for the needs of the Library with City Council and the provincial government.
- Participate in library fundraising activities.
- Participate in the British Columbia Library Trustees Association.
- Be committed to learning about libraries and trusteeship.

Qualifications and Experience:

Trustees must be Surrey residents and may not be employed by the City of Surrey or Surrey Libraries.

An interest in library service, knowledge of the community, ability to work in a political environment, leadership abilities, and teamwork skills are important attributes. Previous service on volunteer boards or committees and fundraising experience are also useful.

Benefits to Trustees

Being a member of the Board is a rewarding experience, an opportunity for learning, a chance to meet new people, and have some fun.

Learn

- about your city, your library, and library trusteeship.
- about issues relevant to the Library community, such as literacy, intellectual freedom, and equitable access to information.
- through the Trustee Orientation Program provided by the B.C. Library Trustees Association, attendance at provincial or national library conferences, and through participation in the work of the Board.

Meet New People

- Library staff and trustees are committed, enthusiastic, and knowledgeable people from wonderfully varied backgrounds.
- “Library fans” are everywhere and you’ll meet them when you represent the Library at community events.

Serve Your Community

- Contribute to the development of a learning community.
- Take pride in helping make Surrey a strong community. In turn, you will be contributing to our citizens' pride in their community through making the Library the best it can be.
- Be an advocate for literacy and for other library initiatives.

How to Proceed?

If you need more information than what's provided in this package, please contact:

Surinder Bhogal, Chief Librarian

Telephone: 604-598-7304

sbhogal@surrey.ca

To apply:

Check the City's website www.surrey.ca or the local newspapers in the fall for the notice about applications to City boards, commissions, and committees.

The deadline for applications is usually mid-November. Your application should include a letter expressing your interest in serving on the Board and a resume that describes your business, educational, and other volunteer or community experience, along with contact information including your street address. Send your application to:

City Clerk

City of Surrey

13450 104 Avenue

Surrey, BC V3T 1V8

Or by email to clerks@surrey.ca

Appointments to the Board are normally made by City Council in December.

History and Services

Established in 1983, Surrey Public Library has grown from a small rural library service to a mature urban library. The Library is one of the most used community resources in Surrey. Each year, the Library welcomes around 2.5 million in-person visits and over 2 million visits to its website and online resources. Nearly 4 million items are borrowed annually and over 170,000 children and adults participate in library programs. Use of electronic resources continues to rise. People have access to more information than ever before through the Library and can access online resources 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Surrey Libraries serves one of the fastest growing community in BC with a diverse population from many cultural backgrounds. This diversity is reflected in its services and collections. People of all ages come to the Library for educational and recreational reading, lifelong learning, and computer access. They also seek training on computer technology and resources for job searching, business or professional interests, and for many other personal and professional reasons.

Surrey Libraries has an annual budget of about \$20 million and employs around 250 full-time, part-time, and on-call staff. The City of Surrey provides funding for approximately 90% of the Library's budget, while the province provides about 5%. The library raises the remainder through fees, fines, and fundraising.

There are 9 branches throughout the city and construction is underway for a library in the Clayton Community Centre, scheduled to open in 2021.

Our services include:

- Free library cards
- Collections in multiple formats such as books, magazines, newspapers, CDs and DVDs, as well as access to electronic information sources, in-branch and on our website
- Information services: in person, by phone, or email
- Literacy services for children, youth, and adults
- A wide-range of programming to support newcomers to Canada
- Read-Ability Services offering audiobooks and large print books for people with print disabilities, and a volunteer-based delivery service for homebound patrons
- Books in 21 languages and English Language learning materials
- Family History collections
- Internet and computer workstations, and Computer Learning Centres
- Programs, seminars and special events
- Quiet study spaces

- Meeting rooms available for rent
- Access to the collections and services of 18 library systems in the Lower Mainland through InterLINK
- Access to the collections held in public libraries across the province through Inter-library loan and the BC OneCard

Vision, Mission, and Values

Vision:

A literate, inclusive, thriving City

Mission:

We connect people, spark curiosity, and inspire learning

Values:

Community-focus

We care about the broader well-being of our community and guide our services based on its changing needs.

Intellectual freedom

We champion the right for different voices and ideas to be heard, and the right for questions to be asked without censorship. We respect and defend individual rights to privacy and choice.

Service Excellence

We provide excellent, responsive service.

Equitable Access

We strive to reduce barriers to service, and meet the community where they are. We uphold the principles of social justice.

Creativity

We continuously explore and pursue new ideas to improve services. We learn from our efforts, remain flexible, adapt, and innovate.

Collaboration

We support, trust, and respect each other. We share stories, ideas, and experiences with each other, our City, community, and patrons.