
Smiths Falls Public Library



Policy Type: **Governance**

Policy Number: **GOV-04**

Policy Title: **Advocacy**

Policy Approval Date: **November 2006**

Last Review Date: **October 19, 2021**

Intent:

The Smiths Falls Public Library Board shall be an advocate for the provision of effective library services by ensuring the community is aware of the importance of the library and government decision-makers at all levels fully understand the role that the Smiths Falls Public Library plays in the community.

Definitions:

Advocacy: The purpose of advocacy is to foster a general awareness and understanding of the importance of the Smiths Falls Public Library.

Lobbying: The purpose of lobbying is to persuade a level of government to resolve a particular decision, policy of law in the Library's favour.

The Board supports the Ontario Library Association and the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries in their efforts to promote a dialogue and cooperation with the provincial government.

Authority:

The Board's authority to undertake advocacy activities is in compliance with the Public Libraries Act, which specifies that the Board may "make rules regulating all other matters connect with the management of the library and library property."

Advocacy initiatives must conform with the Library's current Mission Statement.

Advocacy Role:

The board shall fulfil its advocacy responsibility by identifying and responding to issues, concerns, and government policies that may directly or indirectly affect the Smiths Falls Public Library.

Issue Identification:

The Board shall encourage board members, staff, the Friends of the Library, concerned individuals, and other community or professional organizations to bring advocacy issues to the Board's attention.

The Board shall encourage board members, the Friends of the Library and especially staff to monitor government legislation and maintain close liaison with appropriate government agencies and professional associations.

Issue Response:

After discussion of Advocacy issues, the Board shall direct the Board Chair or the CEO 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 patrons 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 said policies.

Library Spokesperson:

Either the Board Chair (or designate) or the CEO (or designate) will be the official spokesperson for the Library on advocacy issues, depending upon availability and nature of the issue.

Coordination of Advocacy:

The Board should 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.

Municipal Relations:

The Board shall ensure that there are regular communications with Town Council and 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, cooperate, and coordinate with other libraries, arts, heritage, cultural and other community organizations.

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.