

OSM Public Library Board Trustee – Job Description

Role Summary

A Library Board Trustee is a member of a governing board responsible for ensuring the Otonabee-South Monaghan Public Library provides high-quality, accessible library services that meet community needs. Trustees focus on governance, not day-to-day operations, and act in the best interest of the Library and community.

Purpose of the Board

Under the Ontario Public Libraries Act, the Board:

- Is the legal authority that governs the Library
- Ensures delivery of comprehensive, efficient library service reflecting community needs
- Supports free and equitable access to information and lifelong learning

Trustee Eligibility

To serve as a Library Board Trustee in Ontario, individuals must:

- Be at least 18 years old
- Be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident
- Be a resident of the municipality served by the Library
- Not be employed by the Library or the municipality

Additional considerations:

- Board members are appointed by Municipal Council for a term aligned with Council
- The number of municipal councillors on the Board cannot exceed a bare majority

Key Responsibilities of a Trustee

1. Provide Strategic Leadership

- Set and support the Library's mission, vision, and strategic direction
- Ensure decisions align with OSMPL's role as a welcoming community hub for learning and connection

2. Governance & Policy

- Approve and review policies within the Public Libraries Act framework
- Ensure ethical, transparent, and accountable governance

3. Financial Oversight

- Approve budgets and monitor financial health
- Ensure responsible use of public funds

4. Hire and Support the CEO

- Appoint and evaluate the CEO
- Delegate daily operations to the CEO (Board governs; staff manage)

5. Monitor Library Performance

- Assess how well services meet community needs
- Oversee progress toward strategic goals

6. Advocate for the Library

- Promote the Library as the “heartbeat of the community”
- Build relationships with municipal council and partners

Individual Trustee Responsibilities

Trustees are expected to:

- Act honestly, in good faith, and in the best interests of the Library
- Participate in Board meetings and decision-making
- Respect collective decision-making (the Board speaks with one voice)
- Avoid conflicts of interest
- Support a culture of respect, inclusion, and lifelong learning consistent with OSMPL values

Guiding Principles

Trustees help ensure the library:

- Is a welcoming, inclusive community hub
- Supports lifelong learning, literacy, and curiosity
- Encourages innovation and community connection

Time Commitment

- Attend regular Board meetings (typically monthly)
- Participate in committees, planning, and advocacy activities as needed

Key Distinction

- Board role: Governance, strategy, oversight
- CEO role: Operations, staff management, service delivery

In One Sentence

A Trustee helps guide the future of OSM Public Library by providing strategic, accountable governance that ensures inclusive, community-focused library service.

Mission

“The Otonabee-South Monaghan Public Library is a welcoming place and vibrant community hub, dedicated to connecting people through stories, services, and lifelong learning.”