

## POLITIQUE 1.5.1

### BIBLIOTHÈQUE PUBLIQUE DU CANTON DE RUSSELL TOWNSHIP OF RUSSELL PUBLIC LIBRARY



<b>Policy type :</b>	Governance policy
<b>Policy title :</b>	Advocacy Policy (Visibility, influence, positioning)
<b>Policy number :</b>	1.5.1
<b>Date of approval :</b>	March 25, 2009 (Motion 09.03.06)
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### PURPOSE

The Board has the responsibility to promote the interest and the aims of the Library and to advocate for the best possible public library service for the community. This policy defines when, why and how the Board will conduct its advocacy activities and who should engage in these activities on its behalf.

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

### DEFINITIONS

#### ***Advocacy***

Library advocacy is a public, planned & deliberate effort to support, promote and defend the Library or specific library services and/or to raise awareness of public libraries in general, their issues and their causes.

Advocacy seeks to promote the profile of the Library and to foster a general understanding of its importance to the community. It is a continuous and sustained process and may, in some cases, lay the groundwork for lobbying. Advocacy includes lobbying.

#### ***Lobbying***

Lobbying involves interaction with decision-makers to secure specific objectives at an appropriate point in the legislative, policy-making or budget process. It attempts to influence the decision of a level of government in a manner favourable to the Library.

### GUIDELINES

The Board shall be an effective advocate by ensuring that:

- the community is aware of the importance of the library;
- municipal Council fully understands the pivotal role played by the Library in the community;
- government decision-makers at other levels respond to the needs of the public library community.

## **Role of the Board**

To fulfill its advocacy responsibility, the Board will identify and respond in a timely manner to issues, concerns and government programs and policies that may directly or indirectly affect the Library.

### ***Legislation and policies***

In pursuing its advocacy activities, the Board shall:

- respect federal legislation governing advocacy and lobbying, the Public Libraries Act and any applicable municipal by-law governing local boards;
- comply with the Library's mission statement, policies, strategic directions and action plans.

### ***Awareness***

\* The Board shall endeavour, on a continuous and consistent basis:

- to build and maintain good relationships with its clients and with community organizations which benefit from library services;
- to represent the community's needs for public library services to municipal council and make municipal elected officials aware of the Library's programs and services, resources, plans and achievements;
- to represent the needs of the Library to other government decision-makers;
- to ensure a consistent and positive corporate image for the Library and make sure its programs and services are marketed effectively;
- to develop and nurture relationships with organizations promoting interests which co-ordinate with the interests of the Library;

### ***Spokespersons***

The Board Chair (or designate) or the CEO (or designate) are the official spokespersons for the Library on advocacy issues, depending on the availability and nature of the issue.

### ***Specific issues***

#### ***Identification***

\* The Board shall encourage board members, staff, stakeholder organizations, community leaders, clients and concerned individuals to bring advocacy issues to its attention.

\* The Board shall encourage board members and senior staff to constantly monitor government policy and programs and maintain close liaison with appropriate government agencies and library associations.

#### ***Response***

\* The Board shall discuss specific advocacy issues during regular or special board meetings, evaluate consequences on the Library and identify appropriate responses and communication strategies.

\* The Board may choose to 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 choose to convey its decision to the general public and to its clientele in an appropriate manner.

\* The Board shall advise government officials on the impact of current and proposed policies and programs.

\* The Board may at its discretion, and by duly approved motion, undertake appropriate lobbying activities in support of or in opposition to specific issues.

***Evaluation***

\* The Board shall evaluate the efficiency of its advocacy activities and strategies.

***Relationships***

\* The Board will make every reasonable effort to ensure that there is a consistent and coordinated response to advocacy issues from the Board, the Friends of the Library and other stakeholder organizations.

\* To be an effective advocate, the Board shall communicate, co-operate and co-ordinate with other libraries, arts, heritage and cultural organizations and educational institutions for the promotion of its interests.

***Training***

The Board will encourage its members to attend a library advocacy workshop or other similar training.