



Information for Prospective Penticton Public Library Board Members

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Do you want to be more involved with your community?

Becoming a Library Board Member with the Penticton Public Library can be a rewarding way to help shape this valued community service. This package offers information about the Library and how to become involved.

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Vision, Mission and Values

Vision:

The Penticton Public Library provides an inspiring and welcoming space for our whole community to explore, create and grow.

Mission:

Our Library engages our community through evolving services, outreach, and partnerships to meet the needs of our patrons.

Values:

- Access & Learning
- Community & Connections
- Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion
- Service & Accountability

Our values form the core of our work and guide our strategic framework and business plans.

About Penticton Public Library

Public libraries are dedicated to ensuring all community members — regardless of economic situation and social or other life circumstances — have free access to the information, knowledge and cultural expression that can enrich their lives and have opportunities to create and share ideas and information. These ideas and information may be expressed through books, journal articles, websites, lectures, film, music or dialogue, and they may be presented through physical, interpersonal or digital platforms.

Required by provincial legislation to provide services without any user fees, Penticton Public Library is accessible to all Penticton residents. PPL has been dedicated to meeting the lifelong learning, reading and information needs of Penticton residents for more than 100 years.

Services of Penticton Public Library:

- **Collections and resources** — Providing access to physical and digital collections, such as books, music, online learning, film, television shows, newspapers and journals; collecting these materials and managing them for the public.
- **Reference and information services** — Answering research and information questions for residents in person and by phone or email; developing and supporting the PPL's digital branch (website).
- **Library public space** — Providing individual reading and study areas, group study and collaboration areas for free public use, and library programs.
- **Information technology access** — Providing free public access to computers, software and the Internet, including Wi-Fi.
- **Public programming** — Supporting lifelong learning, reading, cultural exchange and appreciation, and community connectedness; providing programs for early childhood literacy as well as information and digital literacy for different ages and demographics.



In addition, PPL also offers specialized services including home delivery and access to alternative formats for vulnerable seniors and library users with mobility challenges and/or print disabilities who live in the City of Penticton, through the Homebound delivery department.

PPL has 24 staff who deliver and support the wide range of library services, most of whom are members of CUPE Local 608. The Library's annual budget was \$1.5 million in 2022, with \$1.34 million funded by the City of Penticton, \$125 thousand from the Province of British Columbia, and library-generated and other revenues of making up the remainder.

History of the Penticton Public Library

The Library opened on September 18, 1909, as the Penticton Public Library Reading Room and Library. In the 1920s the arrangement was formalized with the formation of the Penticton Library Association; the first librarian was Mrs. J. L. Gilley and F. L. McKeever was the first chair of the library board. From then until the mid 1940s Penticton operated its public library in various places in what is now downtown Penticton.

In 1946 a report on education which led to a major consolidation of school districts also brought major changes to public libraries (though they were not mentioned in the report). Union libraries (the precursor of regional libraries) were made up of municipalities and school districts, and the government stipulated that if more than half of the libraries in a district were part of a union library then all the libraries in that school district would become part of the union library. And so, Penticton – which had earlier voted to remain independent of the union library – was forced to join the new Okanagan Regional Library.

The resentment about this imposition lasted for years. This resentment lasted until 1968, when taxpayers voted by referendum to withdraw from the ORL. Since its imposition on Penticton, library users and city councillors had complained on the inadequacy of the ORL collection and the delay in receiving material from headquarters in Kelowna, the final straw was a change to the financing structure which would have seen the larger communities pay even more. City council, led by Alderman Joe Coe, stated that Penticton could provide service for less money. In a referendum held in 1968 the decision was made; 1,763 for and 1,060 against. The divorce became final in 1969 when, under mediation from the province, the Regional library was required to give Penticton 16,000 of the 16,225 books in the Penticton collection. The newly formed library board instructed the librarian to select 225 books of little value and send them back to Kelowna. Today, we have a much friendlier relationship with the Okanagan Regional Library, but the belief that Penticton can provide excellent service for less cost to the taxpayer as an independent municipal library holds true.

Also in 1968, the Library moved into its current location and a renovation in 1988 supplied an increase in size to our current space. In 2013 we underwent a cosmetic renovation which required us to reduce the collection size to provide adequate space for the public and improve sightlines within the library. Today, walking through the Library it's not uncommon for every table to be occupied with students studying for exams, seniors reading local papers, and children being read to in the comfy chair (donated by Rotary Sunrise).



From a small community reading room to our place today as the only Municipal Library in the South Okanagan, the Penticton Public Library has been and continues to be dedicated to meeting the lifelong learning, reading and information needs of Penticton's residents.

Role of the Library Board

The Penticton Public Library operates as a separate legal entity from other City of Penticton services and is legislated under the provincial *Library Act*. The *Library Act* outlines the roles and responsibilities of the Penticton Public Library Board, including governance and financial management requirements.

The Library Board is a volunteer board made up of 9 members, known as board members, who are appointed by the Penticton City Council pursuant to the *Library Act*. Appointments are for two years and may be renewed up to three additional consecutive terms for a total of eight years. Eight of the board members are volunteer members of the community; one is an elected official from the City of Penticton. The Chief Librarian is the ex officio Secretary to the Board. The Chairperson speaks on behalf of the Library Board.

The Library Board is responsible for developing library policy and service strategy, providing financial oversight and working with the Chief Librarian to oversee the provision of services. The Chief Librarian is the sole employee of the Library Board. The Board's official connection to the operational organization of the Library, its achievements and its conduct is through the Chief Librarian. Communication between the Library Board and staff is carried out through the Chief Librarian or their designate.

Job Description: Library Board Member

The Board has a legal and fiduciary responsibility for the delivery of public library services in Penticton. The position of Public Library board member is a volunteer commitment of service to the community.

Responsibilities:

- Adopt written policies to govern the operations, services, and programs of the library.
- Hire a Chief Librarian as required to oversee management and day-to-day operations and evaluate their performance and support their development.
- Participate in the strategic planning process.
- Oversee the development an annual budget for presentation to public officials and participate in the capital planning process.
- Participate in facilities planning processes.

Duties:

- Regularly attend and participate in meetings of the Board and committees.
- Request information to ensure that issues are understood.
- Understand the library's vision, mission, values, policies and services.
- Attend special events and represent the library at PPL 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 the British Columbia Library Trustees Association.
- Be committed to learning about libraries and trusteeship.



Qualifications and Experience:

Board Members must be Penticton residents and may not be employed by the City of Penticton or Penticton Public Library.

An interest in library services, 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 is also useful.

Board members contribute to the success of Penticton Public Library by:

- sharing the library's vision, mission, and values
- providing leadership in establishing the strategic direction of the Library and monitoring progress and spending against the strategic plan and budget
- upholding and strengthening the reputation of the Library in the community
- maintaining an active interest in and awareness of issues affecting libraries generally and PPL in particular
- listening to the views of library users, funders, sponsors, partner groups and others with an interest in the Library's work
- ensuring that the Library maintains effective internal financial and management controls and has identified and managed major opportunities and risks

What does PPL need in a Board Member?

Personal experience with library use

Board members need to understand the importance of public libraries and the services they provide to support lifelong learning, reading, and information needs, encourage creativity and innovation, and connect people with their communities.

Interest and commitment

Board members should have a commitment to the library and an active interest in public issues relating to literacy, learning and libraries, as well as a commitment to advocating on behalf of the library.

Available time

Board members are committed to investing personal time in preparing for board meetings, participating on Board committees, and supporting the library's vision and mission through involvement in library events. A minimum commitment would be two evenings a month, or at least 3 to 4 hours per month.

A good team member

Board members should be prepared to actively participate in the work and discussions of the Board in a way that supports the expression of a diversity of views and promotes informed and independent decision-making. Board members act in alignment with the values of the Library including fairness, openness, thoughtfulness and respect.

A variety of experience

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



BC Library Trustees Association

The BC Library Trustees Association, founded in 1977, represents the boards and trustees that govern local public libraries in British Columbia. This includes 71 library boards and more than 700 library trustees who volunteer their time to oversee the successful operations of public libraries throughout the province. The BCLTA mission is “to support and represent trustees in advancing public libraries.”

BCLTA provides a range of services to trustees and boards to help them become leaders in their communities. BCLTA also provides organized representation to local, provincial, and federal governments on behalf of library trustees. They undertake ongoing advocacy work to these levels of government and the public to raise the profile of – and resolve the issues facing – public libraries across British Columbia.

Membership in the BCLTA is based on one institutional membership for each library board and includes membership privileges for each individual trustee on that board.

BCLTA provides a full day Trustee Orientation Program that Penticton Public Library board members may attend, ideally early in their first year on the Board. TOP explores the roles and responsibilities of library board members in British Columbia. Participants are introduced to the provincial context for public library governance, effective board practices, current public library issues, and strategies for success. BCLTA also organizes an annual governance forum or conference, usually in conjunction with the BC Libraries Conference in April or May. Members of the PPL Board are encouraged to attend the BCLTA governance forum and the BC Library Conference.

How to Proceed?

Board members must be residents of the City of Penticton.

To learn more about being a board member at the Penticton Public Library, contact:
pplboard@pentictonlibrary.ca

To apply:

Fill out a *Penticton Public Library Board Application Form*, available at the bottom of the following web page: <https://www.penticton.ca/EN/main/city/committees-boards.html>

Watch the Library’s website www.pentictonlibrary.ca and City’s website www.penticton.ca or check the local newspapers in the fall for the notice about applications to City boards, commissions and committees, which will provide application deadline and details.

Appointments to the Board will be made by City Council.