

# Cochrane Library Board 5-Year Strategic Guidelines



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## **List of Appendices:**

- (A) Draft Annual Work Plan (AWP) Task Form.

### **Forward & Purpose:**

In the absence of a decisive set of directions by which to guide its efforts, the Cochrane Public Library Board (herein referred to as the Board) has managed the municipal library via a series of motions and resulting by-laws. Although somewhat effective, in that the library's by-laws are constantly being update, this manner of library management restricts the Board to delivering its programme in a reactionary mode. This is not always conducive to the actual needs of the Board, its staff or clientele.

As allowed by Section 35, (1), (a) of the Public Libraries Act R.S.O. Chapter P.44, the Board is able to create long term guidelines. The implementation of such guidelines will provide the Board with a mechanism by which to undertake advanced planning in order to achieve its desired goals. Strategic guidelines will also allow the Board to set standards while measuring successes and shortcomings of such actions. In doing so, it will enable the Board to better deliver its mandate to the residents of Cochrane.

The purpose of this 5-year strategic set of guidelines is to capture the goals and ambitions of the Board over the next half decade and to specifically identify where the Board desires the Cochrane Library to be, in all aspects of its maintenance and development, by the end of the year 2012. These strategic guidelines will be the 'foundation document' on which five individual annual work plans (AWP's) will be created. Each of the five AWP's will have regard to the 'core' activities as identified by the Board. These core activities are as follows:

- (i) Annual Budget (*maintenance of allocations at 2008 levels, salary commitments and capital /non-capital expenditures, additional funding sources*).
- (ii) Human Resources (*workplace harmony, staffing levels, job specifications, collective bargaining requirements, wage levels, job appraisals, training and development*).
- (iii) Programmes & Service (*computerized, and traditional*).
- (iv) Facilities & Equipment (*inventories, maintenance and capital upgrades*).
- (v) Compliance with applicable legislation.
- (vi) Achieving 'accreditation' status.

Throughout the remaining text of this document the above listed core activities will be expanded upon providing a framework by which the Board may subsequently design measures to reach its goals and objectives through each of the AWP's. This 5-year set of guidelines will list the currently known areas of concern and suggest possible methods of mitigation. This document recognizes the inevitable fact that, on occasion, all guidelines/plans must be revised.

## **Budget:**

Given the economic realities facing the community of Cochrane, coupled with the Library staff's desire to become unionized, the Board will endeavour to maintain annual budgets at the 2008 level throughout the said 5-year period. To accomplish this, alternative funding opportunities, such as federal/provincial grants, will be actively sought. The Board will make this particular effort a high priority for the library CEO as will partnership development with the aim of achieving cost effectiveness in the delivery of the Boards' core activities.

In order to maintain the budget allocation and programme delivery balance, all the current programmes, services and undertakings of the Cochrane Public Library, will be subjected to Board review, and each will be rated as to whether or not they are indeed activities the Board considers vital toward reaching its overall objects and commitments to the community. To this end, the Board will, in during the first year of this plan, undertake to determine the actual community library requirements of the residents of Cochrane. All programme and service deliverables will be vetted through this process in order to allow the Board the opportunity to allocate appropriate funding during the given annual budget allocations. Those areas that are deemed to be core will be further prioritized and maintained before other non-core areas, which in some instances may be discontinued altogether. This may also lead to a realigning of job specifications/duties for both the CEO and Assistant CEO positions.

Money management, with an emphasis on health and safety, while delivering the Boards' core activities in a cost effective manner, will be the basis of the five AWP's which are to be developed by the CEO, approved by the Board, and put into implementation prior to the commencement of each fiscal year of the said 5-year period. In this regard, strict, continuous monitoring followed up with monthly-quarterly reports to the Board shall be undertaken by the CEO. The consistent use of a standardized activity budget planning form will be footing for rationalizing allocation requests, monitoring expenditures-targets and year end summaries (*Appendix A 'Draft Annual Work Plan (AWP) Task Form'*).

## **Human Resources:**

In light of anticipated budget pressures and the introduction of collective bargaining, the Board will endeavour to bring about harmony within the library workplace. To this end effective communications will be considered vital. Open and transparent reasoning for Board decisions will be communicated to all staff members through bulletins issued in a timely manner; and following the 'chain-of-command', staff concerns and suggestions will be channelled back to the Board via the library CEO.

Throughout the 5-year period the Board will instruct the CEO to undertake annual 'performance appraisals'. These personalized staff evaluations, signed by both the CEO and employee, will be submitted to the Board by the CEO no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.

### **Human Resources continued:**

The annual staff evaluations will allow the Board to better understand the needs of each staff member while delivering the Boards' core activities. The results of the performance appraisals will be used to ascertain where further individual staff training or correction is required. The CEO will also be subjected to the performance appraisal process.

Whenever it is cost effective to do so, an emphasis will be placed on implementing mechanisms that allow for internal 'cross training' opportunities (e.g. job shadowing) with the objective being that all staff shall become fully capable of 'filling-in' whenever the need arises.

### **Programmes & Services:**

With respect to the mandate of Ontario's community libraries and reasonably foreseen municipal budget pressures, all Cochrane Public Library programmes and services will be subject to an ongoing review by the Board in order to determine if they should be maintained, changed or otherwise discontinued. An emphasis will be placed on maintaining a historical library environment while embracing the recognized need to offer certain computer orientated services actually required by the residents of Cochrane.

This document recognizes that delivering programmes based on 'reaction' often leads to inadequate time or resources remaining to deliver 'core' activities, and thus a devaluation of the library programme overall. As such the Board will be vigilant of this concern at all times.

For the purpose of this initial 5-year set of guidelines the following programmes and services will be considered core to the needs of the Board and thus the Cochrane library:

- (i) Introduction and maintenance of the 'Unicorn' library computer programme (part of 'JASI', the Joint Automated Server Initiative with Ontario Library Services-North).
- (ii) Use of the "Knowledge Ontario" online database.
- (iii) New book acquisitions and proper maintenance of existing library inventories.
- (iv) Programmes that are clearly required by resident clientele.
- (v) Programmes that do not compete with other providers within the community (e.g. schools).

### **Facilities:**

The Board will ensure that the integrity of the library building, equipment and grounds are maintained to a high standard. This will be specifically addressed on an ongoing basis by allocating sufficient resources through the AWP process.

### **Facilities continued:**

The current and outstanding requirement to reconfigure the existing public entrance changes in order to properly secure the library's basement public access areas, including the placement of security cameras in the downstairs hallway, is to receive immediate attention by the Board and thus adequate capital funding will be pursued in 2008.

The Board and CEO will also undertake a physical review of the library complex to ensure the facility and equipment are in keeping with the 'Occupational Health and Safety Act' and with those legislative requirements addressing the needs of handicapped residents.

Ongoing inventories of equipment, books, etc., and maintenance of such inventories, shall be of the utmost importance in light of accreditation requirements.

### **Legislative Compliance:**

The Board will conduct its activities, and that of its staff, in compliance to all applicable laws. As laws are often amended or revoked on occasion, it will be a priority of the Board to ensure that it is kept abreast of these changes and that it comprehends the intent and obligation of such laws. On an ongoing basis, the Board will ensure that; during the AWP process, adequate funding is allocated to ensure training in this particular area for both staff and Board members alike.

Immediate goals will include; a heightened comprehension and working knowledge of the 'Public Libraries Act', the 'Freedom to Information and Protection to Privacy Act (Municipal)', as well as the 'Occupational Health and Safety Act' amongst its staff.

### **Annual Work Plans:**

Three months prior to the commencement of each fiscal year during the said 5-year period, Annual Work Plans (AWP) will be prepared by the Library CEO and submitted for approval by the Board before December 15<sup>th</sup>. Each AWP will address the following broad categories:

- (i) Fiscal requirements, capital expenditures and the anticipated budget pressures for the upcoming year.
- (ii) Job targets and timing of job appraisals, including those of the CEO and individual staff members.
  - (iii) Work and vacation schedules.
  - (iv) Training and development requirements and schedules.
  - (v) Effective task & expenditure monitoring via the proper utilization of the monthly expenditure printouts-coding manual.

### **Areas of Concern and Possible Methods of Mitigation:**

This document recognizes that; the interaction amongst the various users of the Cochrane Public Library, its staff and the Board itself, is a dynamic ever changing process. As such, concerns will eventually arise that will need to be addressed by the Board. Within the context of this 5-year period the known areas of concern are as follows:

- (i) Staff relations and the collective bargaining process.
- (ii) Flexibility of work schedules.
- (iii) Hours of Operation vs. programme delivery.
- (iv) Public and staff safety regarding the front entrance.
- (v) Development of meaningful “new staff” training programme(s).

For each of the identified concerns there are various options by which to bring about mitigation. These optional methods will be specifically addressed in detail during the drafting/approval of each AWP.

### **Policies & Procedures:**

With the adoption of these 5-year guidelines, the Board will undertake a review of its existing policies and procedures to ensure all are compatible with the directions taken in the said guidelines.

Subsequent policies and procedures shall be in accordance to these 5-year guidelines.

Policies and procedures will continue to be updated and made readily available to all staff members.

## **Conclusion:**

The Board, by virtue of its mandate, is tasked with delivering the library programme for the community of Cochrane, while managing those human and financial resources under its stewardship. To this end, these guidelines will allow the Board to identify its five year core objectives while managing budgets, staff and clientele requirements. The Board's core activities for the said five year period are as follows:

- (i) Annual Budget (*maintenance of allocations at 2008 levels, salary commitments and capital /non-capital expenditures, additional funding sources*).
- (ii) Human Resources (*workplace harmony, staffing levels, job specifications, collective bargaining requirements, wage levels, job appraisals, training and development*).
- (iii) Programmes & Service Delivery (*computerized, and traditional*).
- (iv) Facilities & Equipment (*inventories, maintenance and capital upgrades*).
- (v) Compliance with applicable legislation.
- (vi) Achieving and maintain 'accreditation' status.

Through the use of these guidelines and the subsequent five AWP's, the Board will be better focused to deliver to the residents of Cochrane the core programmes and services listed below:

- (i) Introduction and maintenance of the 'Unicorn' library computer programme (part of 'JASI', the Joint Automated Server Initiative with Ontario Library Services-North).
- (ii) Use of the "Knowledge Ontario" online database.
- (iii) New book acquisitions and proper maintenance of existing library inventories.
- (iv) Programmes that are clearly required by resident clientele.
- (v) Programmes that do not compete with other providers within the community (e.g. schools).

Successes and failures in reaching these objectives will be monitored by the Board and addressed through the AWP process.

All Board policies-procedures and bulletins will be compatible with the 5-year guidelines.

AWP's can be revised by the Board when required.

The 5-year strategic guidelines can be amended by the Board when required.

## **Appendices**



**Expenditure & Objective Monitoring:**

**End of 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter:**            (Allocated)    (Expenditure to Date)            **Balance**

*Comments:*

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**End of 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter:**            (Allocated)    (Expenditure to Date)            **Balance**

*Comments:*

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**End of 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter**            (Allocated)    (Expenditure to Date)            **Balance**

*Comments:*

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**End of Fourth Quarter**            (Allocated)    (Expenditure to Date)            **Balance**

*Comments:*



This 5-year strategy was adopted by the Cochrane Public Library Board on April 15<sup>th</sup> 2008 via Motion number 2008-19.