



# GOV 08 Advocacy

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## 1. Preface

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

## 2. Definition

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### Advocacy

Advocacy is ongoing, year-round activities that lays the foundation for specific lobbying campaigns should they become necessary. The purpose is to foster a general awareness and understanding of the importance of the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library.

### Lobbying

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

## 3. Authority

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1. 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 connected with the management of the library and library property." (R.S.O. 1990, C.P. 44, S.23(4))

2. Advocacy initiatives must be in harmony with the Library's current Mission and Vision Statements.

## 4. Advocacy Role

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The Board shall fulfil its advocacy responsibility by identifying and responding to issues, concerns, and government policies that may directly or indirectly affect the Whitchurch-Stouffville Public Library.

## 5. Issue Identification

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1. The Board shall encourage board members and advisors, committee members, staff, stakeholder organizations, concerned individuals, and other community or professional organizations to bring advocacy issues to the Board's attention.
2. The Board shall encourage board members and advisors, committee members, and especially staff to monitor government legislation and maintain close liaison with appropriate government agencies and professional associations.

## 6. Issue Response

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1. After discussion of Advocacy issues, the Board shall direct the Board Chair or the Chief Executive Officer to convey its concerns in person or in writing to the appropriate organization or government agency and to the media where appropriate.
2. The Board may convey its decision to the general public and to the Library membership and patrons in an appropriate manner.
3. The Board shall advise government officials on the impact of current and proposed policies.
4. The Board may, at its discretion and by duly approved motion, undertake appropriate lobbying activities in support of or in opposition to said policies.

## 7. Library Spokesperson

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The Chief Executive Officer (or designate) or the Board Chair (or designate) will act as the official spokesperson for the Library on advocacy issues, depending upon availability and nature of the issue.

## 8. Coordination with Stakeholder Organizations

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The Board should make every reasonable effort to ensure that there is a consistent and coordinated response to advocacy issues both from the Board and from Library staff.

## 9. Relations with the Municipality

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The Board shall ensure that there are regular communications with Town Council and senior administration.

## 10. Relations with other Organizations

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To be an effective advocate, the Library shall communicate, co-operate, and co-ordinate with other libraries and other arts, heritage and cultural organizations.

## 11. Community Awareness

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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.