



Libraries **VALUE BEYOND** words

Advocacy Resources

Context:

Municipal advocacy efforts are a year-round undertaking. In order to be successful in maintaining or increasing municipal funding of libraries, Councils and municipal administrators need to fully understand the value of libraries in their communities. There is an opportunity for regions to support their member libraries with advocacy materials, messaging and training for library managers. It is acknowledged that ALTA has a role to play in preparing trustees to advocate on behalf of their boards.

General Advocacy Topics:

There is a handout that speaks about the role and value of libraries to people in the community. Library boards should also refer to their respective municipality's strategic plan priorities, and identify how libraries help municipalities achieve their goals.



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Common Issues

Board Member Recruitment

Issue: How to recruit active, engaged board members.

Ask yourself:

- » Is your board trying to recruit new members?
- » What skill/experience gaps exist on your board that you could fill with new members?
- » Have you struggled in the past to attract and retain engaged board members?
- » Do your board members understand their roles and responsibilities? Does your library have a robust orientation program for new board members?

Relations Between Library Boards and Municipal Council/Administration

Issue: how to foster and engage understanding that one doesn't report to the other, libraries are not municipal departments and have a range of funding streams (Provincial, Municipal, fundraising, sponsorship, fees, etc.)

Ask yourself:

- » How can board members strengthen the relationship between library boards and municipal councils/administrations?
- » How is your library helping to deliver on municipal priorities? (e.g. economic development, youth and senior programs, etc.) Why is this important?
- » What tactics can be used to illustrate the value that libraries deliver for the community? (e.g. informational graphics, short videos, etc.)

Municipal Funding

Issue: Potential cuts to library operating funds with the expectation that libraries will use reserves for operations.

Ask yourself:

- » Using reserve funds for operations is a short-term strategy. What happens the year after this is used in terms of funding? How does the library cope with inflation and other increased costs?
- » Using reserves means these funds are not available for capital improvements or repairs. How will libraries deal with these emergent requirements?


The Library Act

Issue: Understanding the Library Act and its implications for board members and municipal councils.

Library board members play a crucial role in setting policy and governance for libraries, and ensuring that services meet the needs of the community

Ask yourself:

- » What is the role of library board members with respect to making decisions about the library? What is the role of the library manager?
- » How does the Library Act describe the autonomy of library boards? What financial autonomy do library boards have?

 [Click here](#) or scan the QR code on the right to access **Peace Library System** advocacy resources

