

Trent Lakes Public Library



Policy Type:	Governance	Policy Number:	GOV-11
Policy Title:	New Board Member Mentorship	Initial Policy Approval Date:	March 2021
		Last Review/Revision Date:	
		Year of Next Review:	2025

The New Library Board Member Mentorship program provides guidance, support and a board connection for all new board members during their first year of board service by assigning seasoned board members to act as mentors.

More specifically, the program focuses on:

- How to fully integrate the new board member by understanding board logistics; and,
- Helping the new board members understand how they can contribute to the board based on their leadership competencies.

Each new board member will be paired with an experienced member in order to further the new board member's effectiveness. The mentoring program will supplement information presented in the formal orientation program, and will facilitate new board members getting to know other board members and library management.

The Board Chair and the CEO (if appropriate) will assign a mentor for each new board member.

The program seeks to accomplish its objectives through the following:

- More fully engage a new board member to feel comfortable and welcomed through a one-on-one board member connection.
- Help the new board member to fully understand the organization's strategic priorities and direction, and how best to contribute to future organization initiatives.
- Facilitate the new board member's acclimation by learning from another board member's perspective about board culture, board meetings format, board structure, and how best to contribute to board discussions.
- Provide an overview of the board members, board roles and responsibilities, and expectations for board member meeting preparation and attendance.
- Facilitate board member engagement and contribution and a successful first-year experience.
- Offer guidance for future mentoring of new board members.

Successful Mentor Attributes:

- Reflect a special interest in helping the new board member develop and empower them to make a meaningful contribution.
- Provide specific feedback as well as technical/operational expertise.

- Share knowledge and insights about your experience and what you have learned through board leadership.
- Be a good listener, good observer, and good problem solver; be approachable and accessible throughout the mentoring process.
- Work with other board leaders to get their feedback

Mentor Expectations and Tasks:

- Send “Congrats” e-mail and include “What to Expect Before Your First Board Meeting”
- Includes link information from the Trent Lakes Public Library site, specifically noting the Programs, Policies, and Agenda/Minutes.
- Includes a personal touch that says something about what it was like for you as a new board member –What did you expect? How did you learn what to do? Other?

Prior to first board meeting:

- Contact new board member to provide an overview of the board culture, the board roles and its committees, how to prepare for the meeting, and what to expect at the meeting(s) and for social/fundraising activities.
- Explain that Board Chair will be in touch regarding committee appointments and will cover the work of the committee.

At first board meeting:

- Make introductions to other board members and library staff.
- Sit next to mentee to facilitate questions.
- Encourage feedback on board meeting.
- Throughout meeting, check for understanding.
- After first board meeting, follow up on the meeting and answer any questions.

Following second meeting:

- Follow up on the meeting and answer any questions.
- Follow up questions: Ask what was most interesting about the meeting? What was the most interesting topic?
- Ask them where they could see themselves contributing to an initiative or to board work?
- Ask for feedback on mentoring experience and how it might be improved – report back to board chair or CEO (if appropriate).
- During the mentee’s first year experience, keep notes of what could be incorporated to improve the mentoring experience; ask for feedback from your mentee.