



Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake

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REPORT #: CAO-24-020

COMMITTEE DATE: 2024-05-14

DUE IN COUNCIL: 2024-05-14

REPORT TO: COTW-General

SUBJECT: Library Board Vacancy

1. RECOMMENDATION

It is respectfully recommended that:

- 1.1 Council direct staff to commence the recruitment process to fill the vacancy on the Library Board; and,
- 1.2 The Library Board be engaged in the evaluation and recommendation of a candidate;

2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Council with background and options to respond to the Library Board's request to maintain a Board vacancy for the balance of the Council term (2026).

3. PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek direction from Council on whether to fill the current vacancy on the Library Board.

4. BACKGROUND

- Mr. Graham Bailey resigned from the Library Board on February 26, 2024, creating a vacancy on the nine (9) member Board.
- In email correspondence from the Chair of the Library Board to the Town's Interim CAO, the Chair requested that this position remain vacant for the balance of the Council term (2026). The Chair cited Board cohesiveness and stability in his request. Board appointments run concurrently with the term of Council.
- The Public Libraries Act provides that a vacancy of more than 45 days from the end of a Council term be filled promptly (R.S.O. 1990, c. P.44, s. 12).
- The Act also provides that the Board must consist of at least five (5) members, with a majority being Members of the Community as opposed to Members of Council (s. 10 (2a)).
- Town By-law 1584-85, A By-law to Provide for the Composition of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board establishes that the Library Board will have nine (9) members. To be in compliance with the Act's provision to fill vacancies promptly, a decision to maintain a Board vacancy would necessitate a revision to the By-law.

5. DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

The Town has received a request from the Chair of the Library Board to hold a Board position vacant for the balance of the Council term. Given provisions in the Public Libraries Act to fill vacancies promptly, a revision to Town By-law 1584-85 would be required to reduce the number of Board positions from nine (9) to eight (8).

Council makes public appointments to Boards and Committees to leverage valuable expertise and perspectives that add richness and authenticity to initiatives and projects. The Library Board is requesting that this objective be balanced against the Board's need for cohesiveness and stability at this time.

During the last round of public appointments, the Library Board struck their own nominating committee to review applications and to make recommendations to the Town's Selection Committee. It is recommended that the Library Board be similarly engaged to fill the current vacancy. The outcome of the recruitment process will be the subject of a further report to Council.

6. STRATEGIC PLAN

The content of this report supports the following Strategic Plan initiatives:

Pillar

4. Optimize Organizational Excellence

Priority

2.2 Shared Services

Action

1.2 b) Community Partnership

Pillar

4. Optimize Organizational Excellence

Priority

4.2 Customer Experience

Action

4.2 b) Communications

7. OPTIONS

7.1 Option 1: Council provides direction to staff to commence the process to fill the Library Board vacancy. In the event a successful candidate cannot be found that Council consider the Board's request to reduce the size of the Board.

(Recommended)

7.2 Option 2: Council endorses the Library Board's request to maintain a Board vacancy for the balance of the Council term. By-law 1584-85 is revised to reduce the number of Board members from nine (9) to eight (8).

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are advertising expenses related to placing recruitment ads in the local newspapers. Should Council wish to proceed with filling the Library vacancy, these expenses (approximately \$800) would be covered through the Clerk's Division operating budget.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no environmental implications to this report.

10. COMMUNICATIONS

Should Council recommend that the Library Board vacancy be filled, recruitment advertisements would be placed in the local papers for two weeks. In addition, advertisements would be done through social media, and recruitment information would be available on the Town's website.

11. CONCLUSION

Since their inception, the Town's Boards and Committees have provided tremendous value to the community through diverse experience and perspective. Unless it is Council's direction that the size of the Library Board be modified, it is incumbent upon the Town to move forward in filling the current vacancy on the Library Board. Further, the Public Library Act requires that Board vacancies be filled promptly.

12. PREVIOUS REPORTS

- CS-18-020 – Council Committees Boards 2018-2022
- CS-22-009 – Council Committees/ Boards 2018-2022
- CS-22-036 – 2022 – 2026 Council Committees and Boards

13. APPENDICES

N/A

Respectfully submitted:

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