TORONTO PUBLIC LIBRARY

**STAFF REPORT
ACTION REQUIRED**

Toronto Public Library Board – Self-Evaluation: 2018 Results

Date:	January 21, 2019
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

This report presents the results of the Toronto Public Library Board self-evaluation survey conducted during November and December 2018. This is the third year the Board has conducted this survey. The 2018 evaluation included a question about the orientation for the new Board to benefit from Board member's experience and to support the transition.

The Board's assessment of both their ability to add value and overall efficacy and performance increased from 2017. Results are generally consistent between 2017 and 2018, although the results are not directly comparable due to a change in sample size from nine in 2017 to seven in 2018. No major issues have been identified requiring immediate action.

Overall, all respondents agreed the Board adds value to library service, is effective, and performs well.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board

1. receives the results of the Board self-evaluation survey (Attachment 1) and directs staff to:
   a. incorporate suggestions into the orientation for new Board members as appropriate and in consultation with Board members; and
   b. incorporate recommended topics in Board Education Sessions for 2019.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact beyond what has already been approved in the current year's budget. The Director, Finance and Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and is in agreement with it.

DECISION HISTORY

On April 25, 2016, the Library Board resolved to *"undertake a self-evaluation as a pilot in November 2016 and directed staff to consult with Board members on options for self-evaluation and present options and recommendations to the Board in October 2016"*:
http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2016/apr25/13-tplb-self-evaluation.pdf

On January 30, 2017, the Board approved the report *Toronto Public Library Self-Evaluation: Results*, including the recommendation to repeat the survey in November 2017:
http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2017/jan30/15-tplb-self-evaluation.pdf

On January 29, 2018, the Board approved the report *Toronto Public Library Board – Self-Evaluation: 2017 Results*, including the recommendations to report semi-annually on performance measures and targets and to consult current and future members on topics for the Board orientation sessions:
https://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/content/about-the-library/pdfs/board/meetings/2018/jan29/16-tplb-self-evaluation-2017-results-combined.pdf

ISSUE BACKGROUND

The Toronto Public Library Board adopted a Board evaluation as a best practice in Board governance in 2016, and has since conducted the evaluation in each year of the Board's term.

Goals of the Board self-evaluation are to:
- determine the degree of alignment and agreement by Board members on the Library's mandate, mission, vision and strategic directions;
- identify gaps in knowledge and expertise to be addressed through Board education and orientation;
- identify improvements that promote effective board preparation, meeting and communications; and
- ensure effective governance and informed decision-making by supporting strong Board dynamics.

COMMENTS

The complete results of the 2018 self-evaluation are included in Attachment 1. 2018 was the third year Board members responded to the survey and participation rates decreased from nine respondents in 2017 to seven respondents in 2018.

The Board's assessment of their value-add to Toronto Public Library increased slightly in 2018 with 100% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the Board adds value, versus 89% in 2017. There was also an improvement in the Board's self-perception of overall effectiveness, with 100% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that the Board is effective and performs well, compared with 67% in 2017.

Other results are fairly consistent and no major issues were identified in the survey.

CONCLUSION

2018 is the final year of the current Board's term. The current Board has engaged in Board education sessions, advanced good governance, accountability and effectiveness and championed the mission, vision and service values through the review and approval of key directions and policies including the:
• Strategic plan and accountability framework;
• Revised Board Procedural By-law;
• Board Code of Conduct for Members;
• Ethical Framework for Library Staff;
• Risk Management Framework;
• Community and Event Space Rental Policy;
• Internet Use Policy;
• Programming Policy; and the
• Open Data Policy.

Overall, members have assessed that the Board is effective and performs well. Current and future Board members will be asked to provide input into the orientation for the new members.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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Vickery Bowles
City Librarian

ATTACHMENT

Attachment 1:   Board Self-Evaluation Survey Results 2018

Board Self-Evaluation Survey Results 2018
Q1 Governance role

Answered: 7   Skipped: 0

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	ACCEPTABLE (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	TOTAL
1. Orientation for new Board members is adequate	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	71.43% 5	14.29% 1	7
2. The legal and regulatory framework governing the Board is well understood by Board members	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	42.86% 3	14.29% 1	7
3. The Board understands and contributes to the mandate, vision and mission of the Library	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	57.14% 4	42.86% 3	7
4. The Board is effective at solving problems and leveraging opportunities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	57.14% 4	42.86% 3	7
5. Plans and initiatives approved by the Board demonstrate value for money and a prudent use of public funds	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7
6. The Board reviews and approves operating and capital budget submissions ensuring that they are aligned with Library and City priorities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	57.14% 4	7
7. The Board ensures that its Financial Control Policy is adhered to	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	14.29% 1	71.43% 5	7
8. The Board reviews the annual audited financial statements and takes action where necessary	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	57.14% 4	7
9. Board members demonstrate clear understanding of the respective roles of the Board and the City Librarian	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	71.43% 5	28.57% 2	7
10. Board membership provides for diverse representation, expertise and experience	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	57.14% 4	28.57% 2	7
11. The terms of Board members are well staggered to ensure continuity	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	42.86% 3	42.86% 3	7
12. The Board has an ongoing education program for Board members	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	14.29% 1	42.86% 3	7
13. Board members attend Library special events	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	14.29% 1	57.14% 4	7
14. The Board has a good working relationship with the Toronto Public Library Foundation	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	85.71% 6	7

Q2 Integrity, Ethics and Values

Answered: 7   Skipped: 0

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	ACCEPTABLE (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	TOTAL
15. Board discussions are guided by the best interests of the Library and the public it serves	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7
16. Board members participate in discussions in a manner that is reflective of their duty of loyalty and due diligence	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7
17. Conflict of interests are declared and effectively addressed	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7
18. Board members comply with the Board's Code of Conduct	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7
19. Board members comply with the Board's Lobbying Disclosure Policy	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7
20. Controls are in place to maintain a high level of integrity of the Library and its staff	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7

Q3 Strategy development and performance monitoring

Answered: 7   Skipped: 0

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	ACCEPTABLE (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	TOTAL
21. The Board has an approved strategic plan that sets out goals and priorities	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	85.71% 6	7
22. The Board's meeting agenda reflects a strategic vs. an operational focus	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	57.14% 4	7
23. The Board keeps a steady focus on monitoring and adjusting plans to meet goals and strategic vision	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	57.14% 4	7
24. The Library's performance measures are realistic and challenging	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	57.14% 4	42.86% 3	7
25. Annual performance targets are met	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	57.14% 4	42.86% 3	7

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

I would like to see the board be more interested in some of the operational sides of the branches. There are more ways to make our branches green beyond technology but the board does not seem interested in any of these ideas.

The new Strat Plan and accompanying Ops plans and scorecards are very well developed and easy to monitor from a Board perspective. Well done staff!

Q4 Teamwork and Collaboration

Answered: 7   Skipped: 0

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	ACCEPTABLE (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	TOTAL
26. All members fulfil their role and responsibility and at meetings have an opportunity to contribute equally to Board discussion	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	57.14% 4	7
27. Members act collegially, debate independently and decide collectively	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	28.57% 2	71.43% 5	7
28. Members work together to find the best solution	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	57.14% 4	7
29. All members support the final decisions of the Board	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	28.57% 2	57.14% 4	7
30. There is a high level of trust and respect between Board members	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	28.57% 2	57.14% 4	7
31. The Board avails itself of external advice or opinion when needed	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	42.86% 3	42.86% 3	7

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

The Board works very well with great respect for each other's expertise and opinions. Outside advice has been sought as is deemed necessary by the Board and the City Librarian.

Q5 Advocacy and Communication

Answered: 7   Skipped: 0

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	ACCEPTABLE (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	TOTAL
32. Board members have a current and adequate understanding of the issues facing stakeholders, partners and communities as well as culture the Library works in	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	28.57% 2	42.86% 3	7
33. The Board ensures that the Library's accomplishments and challenges are communicated to stakeholders and the community	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	28.57% 2	28.57% 2	28.57% 2	7
34. The Board pursues relevant advocacy initiatives at all levels of government and with other stakeholders	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	57.14% 4	28.57% 2	7
35. The Board works in partnership with the Friends of the Library and library customers encouraging	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	42.86% 3	7

COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS:

The Friends of the Library are regular visitors to the Board and we appreciate their support, both from a volunteer and financial perspective...and the friendly rivalry between the South and North organizations!

Q6 Overall rating

Answered: 7   Skipped: 0

	STRONGLY DISAGREE (1)	DISAGREE (2)	ACCEPTABLE (3)	AGREE (4)	STRONGLY AGREE (5)	TOTAL
36. The Board adds value to the Library service in Toronto	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	57.14% 4	42.86% 3	7
37. The Board is effective and performs well	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	42.86% 3	57.14% 4	7

Q7 Areas of Board excellence:

Answered: 3   Skipped: 4

RESPONSES
Planning for future budget cycles, connecting the dots between various issues, programs, and budgets
Staff and Board relationship
The Board has played a significant role in the development of the Strat Plan--with particular recognition due to X for their tireless interest and support of the new Strat Plan.

Q8 Areas where the Board could do better:

Answered: 3   Skipped: 4

RESPONSES
I am still getting the hang of it :)
No recommendations
The TPL is a very complex organization. It takes a great deal of time to fully understand the structure. It is much more than a collection of books. This complexity makes it a challenge for new Board members to fully participate in a meaningful manner.

Q9 Suggestions for improvement:

Answered: 2   Skipped: 5

RESPONSES
None
The orientation was good, especially from a governance perspective with City officials present to explain Codes of Conduct etc, but I think perhaps the orientation process might be revisited to assist new Board members in participating more fully. One suggestion could be to have returning Board members conduct designated components of the subject matter orientation, obviously with staff support. It is difficult for the staff to appreciate how complex the subject matter is for newcomers. Perhaps a returning Board member could lead an orientation session on digital, with staff support. This serves to illustrate the level of info new members need initially, that it is possible to absorb all the information coming at them and it will also permit staff and Board, as appropriate, to act as a team. Governance--and subject matter.

Q10 Please identify potential topics for future Board education sessions:

Answered: 3   Skipped: 4

RESPONSES
Organizational financing 101
Invite more Managers to come and profile their programs . I've been impressed every time I've seen this at the Board and it's great for morale .
I would be interested in another session on digital--the overall strategy, and update of where we are, and how we measure up against, for example, the NY Library. I know this has been presented but again, there is so much info to absorb that another presentation on this key area would be valuable. I would also be interested in another session on TPL from a social service perspective-- we do so much to support newcomer integration etc and in some neighbourhoods play a critical role in terms of social services.

Q11 Based on your experience as a board member, please provide suggestions on topics for the orientation of the new Board:

Answered: 2   Skipped: 5

RESPONSES

I think a minimum half day session filled with presentations from each business unit would form good starting point for new members of the Board

1. An overview, in bullet form, of the key services the TPL provides ie collection, digital, research services etc in percentage terms (I'm pretty sure this already exists--I think I can picture the pp presentation). Key challenges the TPL will potentially face in 2019. A review of the operations and capital budget and how the timing aligns with City Hall.