



Extreme Board Makeover

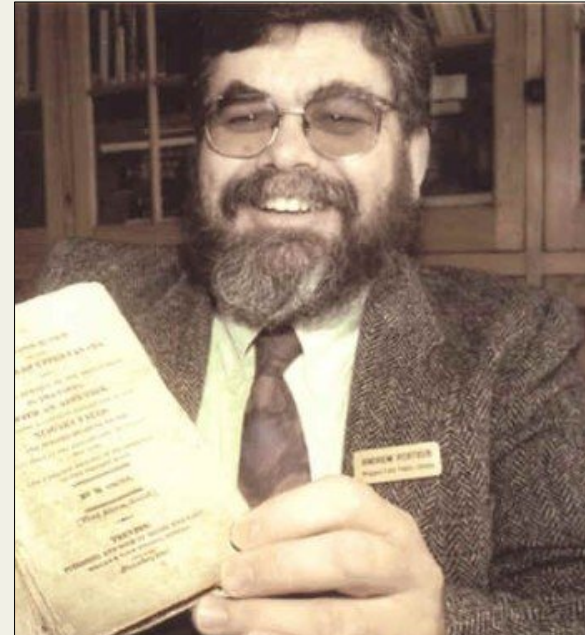
One library board's journey to overcome leadership & organizational issues in the quest to become a 'dream board'.

Friday, January 29, 2016

Today's Presenters:



Terry Flynn



Andrew Porteus

Terry Flynn

Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council
Former Chair, Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board
Supervisor, Niagara EMS
St. Davids' Lions' Club
Chair, Niagara Regional Airport Board
...and many other volunteer positions



Andrew Porteus

Manager of Information Resources & Connections, Niagara Falls Public Library

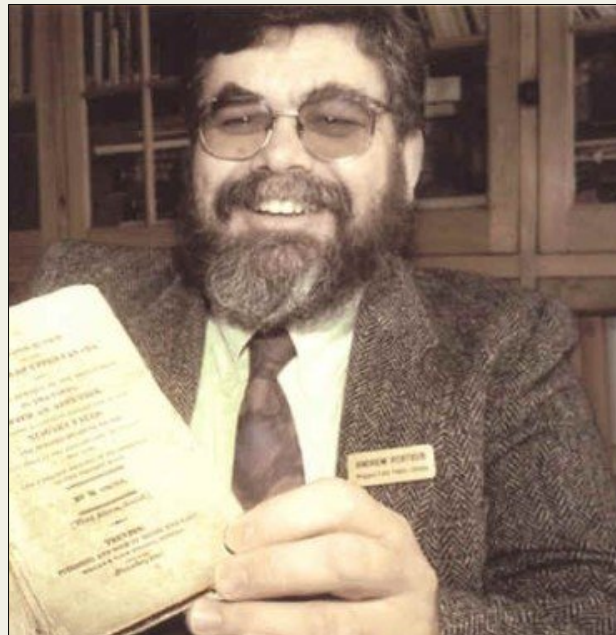
Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board, 2011-present (Chair 2012-present)

Fort Erie Public Library Board 2003 – 2009 (Chair 2007-2009)

Ontario Library Boards Assn Conference Planner, 2006-2007; Regional Rep 2015 –

Many more including Navy League Fort Erie; Adult Literacy Council of Greater Fort Erie;

Ontario Association of Library Technicians, Fort Erie Jaycees



**Today we want to take you
on a journey from a
totally dysfunctional board
to a well-functioning,
productive board**

Along the way we will:

Discuss the characteristics of a dysfunctional board

Discuss the characteristics of a well – functioning board

Talk about the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library's transformation from a dysfunctional to a functional board

Offer tips and suggestions for improving your board experience

Some Signs of A Dysfunctional Board:

- One member dominates the discussion
- The chair doesn't allow discussion and arbitrarily cuts off debate
- The board is buried in details
- The board is adrift
- The board is out of touch with the community and the times
- The board doesn't understand its role in relations with management and staff
- Board meetings are unstructured
- The board ignores financial implications of decisions
- High staff turnover (including CEO)(NOTL had 6 between 2005-2012)
- Poor attendance

And a real biggie.....



They actually happened in a NOTL Public Library board meeting – from one board member to others



IT'S YOUR TURN

And now....

**Terry Talk:
where Terry will
discuss his experiences
on the dysfunctional
Niagara-on-the-Lake
Public Library Board**



**Andrew will now read a
summary of the 'Bad Board'
from another former
Board member**



Copy of the letter that was read

We had never had a formal introduction to the staff. Our only contact with the CEO was that she sat in on meetings and recorded the minutes. She was not a welcoming presence and was not forthcoming with information. Seemed to resent the role of the Board....possibly worried that we would 'get up in her grill" as it were. New board members were not provided with useful orientation binders. There was a distinct unwillingness to share information and to develop working relationships within the board. We were given copies of the public libraries act and told to familiarize ourselves with it. One inexperienced new board member was asked to take on the onerous task of revising the policy manual as chair of this committee and then given no guidance of any kind even when they did directly ask for help. This particular board member spent hours researching various emergency and disaster plans, bringing the information to the committee and having it lead nowhere. This person was then singled out for being ineffective.

Letter continued

Meetings were raucous events where voices were raised, obscenities were bandied about, there was name calling and books/papers/board materials were thrown and one particularly overwhelmed board member wept openly at all the fighting. There was a lot of stress with regard to the death threat situation. The board and the town delayed action on the situation for far too long and should have dealt much more swiftly and decisively for the sake of the group, the library and its' credibility in the town in general.

Another red flag was the formation of an executive board composed of the Chair, Vice-chair and one or two board members who were privy to all information, including finance, confidential or not. The rest of the board proceeded in ignorance and was given information at monthly meetings.

While board members were encouraged to go to OLA, they were not adequately prepared to selection beneficial sessions and were also not expected to submit reports after the conference.

When entering the room where a monthly board meeting was held, no one would say hello and all participants would be reading their agendas. There was no collegial spirit. Not surprisingly, this board accomplished nothing.

So what does a well Functioning board look like?

- The Board is focussed on the future
- The Board is clear about its roles and responsibilities
- Every member is engaged and brings some sort of value to the table
- Discussion is about strategies and issues of importance
- Members know each other and hold each other in mutual respect
- Meetings are open to differing views and opinions and are able to reach decisions through civilized debate
- Succession strategy is in place
- Members are committed to personal education and development of both board members and staff
- Relationship with Chief Librarian / CEO is respectful and supportive



IT'S **YOUR** TURN



So how did it
get turned around?



and hard work

These guys!



Niagara-on-the-Lake Town Council were aware of the difficulties the Library Board was having, and instead of taking the easy route and reappointing the incumbents, they looked closely at applicants to see what skills each brought to the table.

They appointed people who:

- had experience on other library boards
- had experience in the library field
- had experience in the HR (human resources) world
- represented different segments of the community and were at different stages of life
- had shown commitment to their community in a variety of ways
- had a wide range of employment and social activities

And to show they were serious about the Library Board, appointed 3 town councillors (out of a total board of 9 members)

Steps to turn the board around: the first year

- hire the current interim CEO for a full calendar year to give stability
- develop a strategic plan with both staff and board involvement (facilitated with an outside consultant)
- get policies in place – priority ones to support and guide the CEO; human resources, & those required by statute
- Intensive preparation for hiring CEO – defining a whole range of desirable features & qualities using a consultant, and with intensive preparations for advertising the position, interviewing, conducting 2nd interviews, reference checking, and finally making an offer
- Total of 161 motions that year, most dealing with policy issues (total of 91 the previous year)

Steps to turn the board around: subsequent years

- continuing with policy development
- review & revision of strategic plan ½ way through the term
- internal equity process
- revision of board meeting agenda
- frequent meetings/calls/emails between CEO & chair
- respect for the roles board & staff have developed
- introduction of staff members to board
- fostering collegiality amongst board members
- talk to councillors & present to council on a regular basis
- actively seek out and recruit people to apply for the library board for the next term
- leave a legacy letter to both Town Council & the next board of where our vision was taking the library (May be freely ignored by the next board)



NOTL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD MEETING AGENDA

Wednesday, March 25th, 7:00 p.m.
Library Rotary Room

1. Call to Order
2. Introductions
3. Deputations
4. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
5. Approval of Agenda
6. Approval of Consent Agenda
 - 6.1. Library Board Meeting Minutes, February 3rd, 2015
 - 6.2. Chief Librarian's Report
 - 6.3. Statistics Reports
 - 6.4. Ontario Library Association Conference Reports
7. Staff Introductions
 - 7.1. Beth Labelle, Outreach Coordinator
 - 7.2. Debbie Krause, Youth Library Service Associate
8. Board Orientation
 - 8.1. Revised Orientation Program
 - 8.2. Board Roles & Responsibilities
 - 8.3. Recent & Upcoming Initiatives
 - 8.4. Niagara Public Libraries Board Orientation, April 11th
 - 8.5. Lead the Change Workshop, May 12th
 - 8.6. 2014 Budget Year-End Review - Brenda Garrett, NOTL Finance Manager/Treasurer
9. Policy Review & Updates
 - 9.1. Policy Manual Distribution
 - 9.2. Policy Committee Meeting Date
10. Business Arising from the Library Board Meeting Minutes, February 3rd, 2015
 - 10.1. Meeting Schedule
 - 10.2. Strategic Planning Day, May 23rd
 - 10.3. Library Scrapbooks

Meeting agenda

Consent agenda – saves time for routine, monthly reports. **MUST BE READ AHEAD OF TIME!!!**

Make sure board & staff know each other

Every board meeting should have a board orientation/development component

Policy review & revision should be part of every board meeting

11. New Business

- 11.1. Holiday Closures
- 11.2. Library Board Member Recognition
- 11.3. Staff Development
- 11.4. Historic Plaque Relocation

12. Board Inquiries

13. Adjournment

Next Meeting
April 22nd, 2015
Library Rotary Room

Mission Statement

The NOTL Public Library is a team of professional staff and community volunteers committed to enriching the community by providing access to the world's ideas and information.

Vision Statement

The NOTL Public Library is an important community hub proactively encouraging community connectivity and creative thinking through its quality, future-focused library services.

Values

Responsive

The NOTL PL will respond to community needs and concerns.

Current

The NOTL PL will be up-to-date with respect to media, materials & outlook.

Collaborative

There will be collaboration between the community, the staff and the Library Board.

Inclusive

The NOTL PL will not discriminate on the basis of gender, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Informed

The Library Board and staff will be informed and maintain professional best practices.

Innovative

The NOTL PL will creatively develop and implement innovative policies and practices while striving for excellence in patron service.

Respectful

The NOTL PL will demonstrate respect for all patrons and their values.

“Board Inquiries” gives a time for individual board members to ask questions and raise concerns – these often equate to an agenda item at a subsequent meeting


Mission statement, Vision statement, and Values are included on every agenda to help keep us aware of our core values and responsibilities. These are reviewed every time the strategic plan is revised

Need help? there's lots available - just ask

Public Libraries Act

R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER P.44

OLBA's Leadership by Design
Cut to the Chase
Ontario public library governance
at-a-glance



Definitions
A public library board is a governing board, a legal corporation, with the authority to make policy and to govern the library's affairs under the Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c. P.44.

Governing
is different from managing. A board doesn't run an organization but ensures that it is properly run.

Governance
is the entire framework set by the board to direct the organization, that identifies how a board will conduct business, how power will be divided and delegated and what processes will be set up to achieve accountability.

Cut to the Chase is a quick reference guide on public library governance in Ontario and the library board's fundamental responsibilities for achieving effective leadership and sound governance. It serves as the foundation document in **OLBA's Leadership by Design** - a primary resource for library trustees to find the information and make the connections they need to strengthen their capacity as key decision-makers in their communities.

www.accessola.com/olba/LSD

Ten principles guiding effective library governance
that is based on

- Build a solid governance framework that includes by-laws, policy and an achievable plan that is based on why you exist - your mission.
- When you've built it, make sure it works and keep it in shape.
- Know who you are there to represent and how to connect with them.
- Make good decisions on their behalf.
- Assess what you have accomplished and report progress regularly.
- Know what information you need and where and how to get it in order to manage risk.
- Know who you need on the board and who you need to run the library.
- Know where and how to get the resources you need.
- Remember, you are not there to manage - you are there to govern.

The Board's authority
3 Major Responsibilities
1. A board's duty is to provide comprehensive and efficient public library service that reflects its community's unique needs.
2. A board must submit budget estimates to municipal council and participate in the municipality's annual audit that includes boards.
3. To receive its annual grants from the Government of Ontario, a board is required to submit statistics and financial information along with a completed public library operating and pay equity grants application form to the province each year.

The Public Libraries Act, RSO 1990, c. P.44 governs the operation of public libraries in Ontario and is specific legislation that can override certain sections of other more general acts such as the Municipal Act.

A library board is an independent body and cannot become a committee of council without legislation being passed that makes this.

Membership
Members are appointed by municipal council according to rules set out in the Act.
Minimum size for a library board is five members.
The number of municipal councillors on a library board may not exceed one less than the majority; a county board may have a bare majority of councillors.
Library or municipal employees may not be board members.

Municipal integration
Ontario public libraries enjoy varying levels of integration with their municipalities. One library may operate with separate financial policies and processes, while another may simply adopt its municipality's policies. Many boards have target share ties with their municipality to maximize the effectiveness and to collaborate in achieving common goals. While the library board is an independent body and responsible for directing the disbursement of library funds, it can be advantageous to align agendas and streamline business processes with its municipality. Both the library and the municipality serve the same public and address issues common to both bodies.

Copyright © 2007 Ontario Library Boards' Association • This is the 2nd edition of Cut to the Chase - September 2012

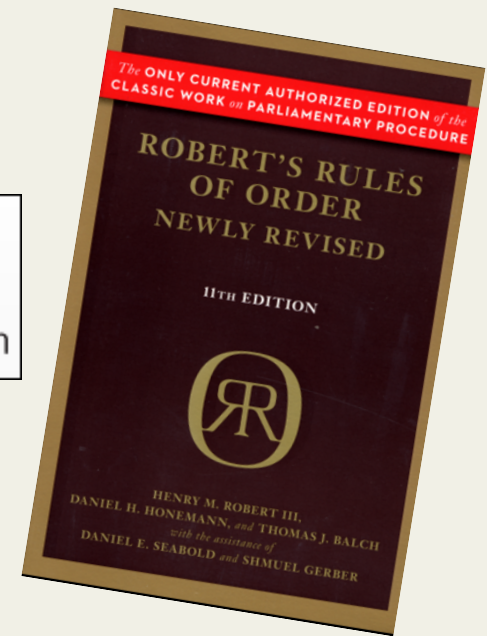


:. ontario library association



**Southern
Ontario
Library
Service**

**Service des
bibliothèques
de l'Ontario-Sud**



**Federation of
ONTARIO
PUBLIC
LIBRARIES**

**La Fédération des
BIBLIOTHÈQUES
PUBLIQUES
DE L'ONTARIO**

...and make sure you and your library belong to



:. ontario library boards' association

For and about members of the ONTARIO LIBRARY BOARDS' ASSOCIATION

InsideOLBA

Spring 2015

No. 36

ISSN 1192 5167

Message from the President



It is with a great deal of pride that I assume the 2015 leadership of Ontario Library Boards' Association (OLBA) and I would like to thank the Membership most sincerely for their support. I will work hard to uphold your trust and confidence in me. One of my first tasks is to communicate with the Membership through this newsletter, to keep you advised of the work that OLBA Council is embarking upon in 2015.

As many of you may be aware, I was OLBA's President in 2008 when I had been with OLBA Council for less than one year. Although I had a good idea of the challenges that my own library board was facing, I had yet to discover those at a provincial level. The more I came in contact with other library boards, the more I became aware of the commonalities that exist amongst library boards; that boards of small, large, urban and rural libraries, to one degree or another, needed to focus upon board training and development in order to provide their libraries with sound leadership, based on good governance practices.

Leadership by Design – The Next Generation

Over the years, OLBA Council has strived to address the issue of board training and development through networking opportunities, sponsorship of various workshops at Super Conference and OLS North Conferences...

but above all, through its cornerstone educational resource, *Leadership by Design*, which came into full force in 2008. However in 2014, it was decided that in order to keep this resource timely, current and responsive to PL Boards' needs, *Leadership by Design* was due a makeover. So thanks to a partnership between the Ontario Library Association and the Federation of Provincial Libraries, *Leadership by Design, The Next Generation* has been developed. There's much more information on this exciting new program within these pages!

OLBA Council 2015

Last Fall's municipal elections brought about a number of changes in the composition of library boards. Since OLBA Council is composed of serving library board members, those changes resulted in a number of new faces at the Council table. On behalf of OLBA, I am very pleased to welcome four new, Regional Representatives to Council, namely:

- **Andrew Porteus** – Niagara on the Lake PL Board (represents Central West Region)
- **Kerry Badgley** – North Greenville PL Board (represents Eastern Region)
- **Nancy McLuskey** – Haliburton Co. PL Board (represents Central East Region)
- **Eileen Johnson** – Greenstone PL Board (represents Northwest Region)

continued on page 3