**SHORTGRASS LIBRARY SYSTEM POLICY MANUAL**

**Section B: Board Governance**

**Policy B.3: Board of Trustees**

*Updated and Approved: March 18, 2015*

**Background**

The Shortgrass Library Board believes in and is committed to cooperative library service at a regional level. Shortgrass board members are individuals who willingly invest their time, energy, knowledge, talent, and experience to establish and fulfil the purpose of the Shortgrass Library System. Each member's perspective contributes to the Board's decision-making powers and the governing responsibilities of the Board.

Each member municipality appoints a member to the Shortgrass Library Board. Members may also be on the local municipal library board. Appointments may be one to three year terms, with a preference for multi-year terms. When a term expires, the municipal council may reappoint the member for another term. The maximum duration a member can serve on the Board is nine years.

Additional members may be appointed to the Board in accordance with the Alberta Libraries Act and the Regulations.

**Purpose and Scope**

The Shortgrass Library Board is the legal and judicial authority for the Shortgrass Library System. The Board is governed by the Libraries Act of the Province of Alberta and by the Shortgrass Library System Agreement. The Board establishes the library system's mission, or purpose, as well as the goals, by-laws and policies, and budgets for management of the system and the programs and services it provides.

The Board is also responsible for hiring and evaluating the Library System CEO, who administers the system and who works with the Board and Staff to ensure system progress and the achievement of goals. This includes establishing a planning cycle for the continuing development and growth of the library system.

The Shortgrass Library Board also represents the system to local and regional communities. As the trustee of Shortgrass, the board represents the community and is responsive to community interests. It is the responsibility of the Board to be aware of local and regional community needs, expectations, and concerns regarding library services. As an advocate of Shortgrass, the board informs councils, local library boards, MLAs and MPs, of Shortgrass services, and advocates for system needs at all levels of government.

**Expectations of a Shortgrass Board Member**

1. Interested in libraries, willing to serve, and committed to the beliefs, mission and goals of the Shortgrass Library System.

2. Able to serve for a period of up to four years.

3. Willing to attend board meetings and any special meetings at the call of the chair.

4. Willing to consider undertaking an executive position (chair, vice-chair) on the board as required.

5. Willing to commit to developing board skills and competence by taking part in continuing education and trustee development activities.

**Responsibilities of a Shortgrass Board Member**

1. To be aware of board responsibilities as defined in the Libraries Act and the Shortgrass Library System Agreement.

2. To maintain confidentiality and impartiality. Recognize that the library system board represents a public trust which is concerned with the provision of library service at a regional level. A board member must maintain a broader perspective than the interests of one's local library and be aware of legal responsibilities of a broader scope.

3. To arrive at decisions concerning Shortgrass matters only after full discussion with other board members and the library board one represents.

4. To support and protect library personnel in the proper performance of their duties.

5. To encourage and attend workshops, seminars, and conferences which provide wider learning opportunities for board members.

6. To review all information provided in advance of meetings, attend meetings regularly, and to be on time for meetings.

7. To participate in the development and evaluation of library system goals and policies.

8. To report regularly to the local library board and municipal council; to be aware of local community needs and expectations and to express local views and concerns to the Shortgrass Library Board.

9. To maintain personal contact with one's M.L.A. and Member of Parliament and to ensure they have sufficient information about the Shortgrass Library System.

10. To support a productive spending policy and to help determine the most viable means of making system resources available to all members.