

MEDIA RELATIONS and SOCIAL MEDIA USAGE

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to clarify and assign responsibilities for media relations and social media usage by Board Trustees and to assign authority to the chair of the City of Lethbridge Library Board for communicating with the public and the media on matters relating to board policies.

PERSONS AFFECTED

Board Trustees/Board Chair/CEO

POLICY STATEMENT

The Board Chair is the only member of the Board authorized to use media to communicate on behalf of the Board on matters relating to Board policies. The Board Chair may delegate this authority to another Board Trustee as required. The authority of the Board Chair, or the Trustee designated as media liaison, consists of making statements on behalf of the Board that fall within, and are consistent with, a reasonable interpretation of Board policies.

Board Trustees should not present themselves as members of the Board on any social media platform but can express their opinions on various subjects as citizens, subject to the laws of the land.

PROCEDURES

Public Statements

When using media, or communicating with the public, the Board Chair or their designate must:

- avoid speaking negatively of the Board Trustees, library staff, library management; or any of the stakeholders of the Lethbridge Public Library, Lethbridge City Council, the City of Lethbridge, or the Chinook Arch Regional Library System when making public statements.
- abide by the Ethical Guidelines of Conduct for Library Board Trustees (LB7), when making public statements.
- withhold information, including textual or visual material, that is confidential or has been disclosed to the Lethbridge Public Library by a third party, without prior authorization.
- identify themselves as trustees of the Board when posting information on public websites about the work they do, or when participating in discussions about the City.



- adhere to the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.
- speak to the media, or use social media, about library operations only if they have been designated by the Board Chair, as the official spokesperson for a particular project or issue.
- be aware of this policy and the Library's Communications Plan before becoming designated as a Library spokesperson.

Social Media

- All Board Trustees when expressing personal viewpoints on social media, should not do so as a member of the Board. Any statements being made must be done as a private citizen.
- In their capacity as individuals, Trustees of the Board have the same rights of free expression as any individual, however they may not represent the Lethbridge Public Library on their own personal social media sites and they are reminded that they are bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

REVISION HISTORY

- January 11, 2017: New Policy
- June 13, 2018: Revised
- April 14, 2021: Revised
- November 9, 2022: Revised
- October 9, 2024: Revised