



## Clarington Public Library Board 2018 – 2022: Our Legacy

### Board Trustees:

Steven Cooke, Chair  
Terri Gray, Vice Chair (2018-2019)  
Judy Hagerman, Vice Chair  
(2019 – 2022)

Councillor Ronald Hooper  
Councillor Joe Neal  
Donald McKenzie

Marina Ross  
Katherine Warren  
Christopher Hinbest  
Nancy Brandon

### Our Term:

The 2018- 2022 Clarington Public Library Board governed during the COVID-19 pandemic, an unprecedented time whereby we saw our services and locations shut down due to the rapid spread of the novel virus. In March 2020, the Library Board and Library System moved into Emergency Planning for over 2 years, with many projects put on hiatus until 2022. Our staff stepped up to the challenge and we supported and applauded their dedication to providing library & museum services in the face of the pandemic.

In 2020, the Library Board assumed operation of the Clarington Museums & Archives, a significant governance scope change that harmonizes the knowledge centres in Clarington into a single organization. While this Board was not able to complete the full harmonization due to the pandemic, we have created the path and vision for its completion.

The legacy of this Library Board is that through the COVID-19 pandemic, we recognized key barriers to accessing library and museum services. In response, the Board authorized the removal of fines for overdue materials, automatically renewing items and online library card registration. Pop culture history depicts libraries as organizations with punitive systems in place and closing the book on fines opens the door to transforming the library to a place where use is encouraged and not penalized. As the organization emerges from the pandemic, there is much opportunity for next Library Board to continue to evolve, harmonize and transform library and museum services.

### Challenges Encountered:

Each Library Board term will encounter unforeseen events, and we experienced and navigated several challenges:

- COVID-19 pandemic
- Provincial funding cuts to the valued Interlibrary Loan service
- Reduced funding from the Municipality
- Departure of Deputy CEO in 2020 and CEO in 2022

### *How we met the Challenges:*

- COVID-19 pandemic:
  - o Offering curb-side pick up
  - o Introduced online library cards for instant access to digital materials
  - o Expansion of digital materials
  - o Expansion of loanable technology



- Introduction of virtual programs
- Provincial funding cuts to the valued Interlibrary Loan and Courier service
  - Implemented a private courier system
  - Utilize the Library Materials Book Rate from Canada Post to maintain ILLO Service
- Reduced funding from the Municipality
  - Advocate for funding
  - Success in grant applications for special projects
- Departure of Deputy CEO in 2020 and CEO in 2022

### Significant Accomplishments:

This Library Board is immensely proud of what was accomplished, and we believe it is a springboard for future boards:

- Assuming operations of the museum & archives
- Elimination of fees for overdue materials
- Online library cards
- Implementing a multilingual collection
- Renovation of the Courtice Branch
- Accessibility renovation of the Bowmanville Branch
- Approval of a renovation at the Orono Branch
- Hiring a new CEO in 2022



### Our Community:

A library and museum are mirrors with the community. We are what the community needs. When a metamorphosis occurs, we transform in harmony. We are a catalyst for development and lifelong learning. We believe our community views us as:

- A trusted place to learn
- A reliable place and space for knowledge
- Welcoming, knowledgeable and caring staff
- A space for connections to culture, technology, people and ideas
- A gathering point for shared experiences
- A champion and advocate for literacy and learning
- A community living room

### Our Council and Partners:

Our key stakeholders are our main funders, Council, and our community partners. We are proud of the positive reputation we have in the community. We believe we are viewed as:

- An essential service that attracts homebuyers and new businesses
- An important budget item that yields a positive return on investment
- Socially benevolent
- A major partner in building a strong community
- A reliable place and a space for partner programming



## What We Have Left Unfinished:

The Library Board was keen to see several projects through, however due to the COVID-19 pandemic and turnover in the top 2 senior positions, our work is not yet complete:

- A new Strategic Plan
- Orono branch accessibility renovation
- Complete Bowmanville branch renovation
- Complete the harmonization of the Library with the Museum & Archives

## Opportunities for the Next Library Board:

The next Library Board will have several opportunities for improving services to the community, with the key priority of a new Strategic Plan:

- Develop a new Strategic Plan for a harmonized organization
- Re-opening of the Waverley Place and permitting access to historical collections
- Observing post-pandemic trends and ensuring the organization is structured for success
- Observing community changes and ensuring plans are in place to meet community expectations
- Exploration of alternative service models for rural communities such as pick up lockers and/or a mobile service
- Ensuring diversity, equity and inclusion are integrated into all planning processes

## Predicted Challenges for the Next Library Board:

- Budget is not keeping pace with baselevel services and staffing. The Library Board will need to play a major role in advocating for increased funding and ensuring financial forecasting strategies are reviewed annually
- The rapid population growth and change in demographics means the organization needs to enhance public service
- The removal of fine revenue has left a gap in the revenue line. The next Library Board will need to explore alternate sources of revenue to offset expenses.
- Retaining and attracting talent will be essential, considering the rate of inflation coupled with a highly competitive labour market
- The Orono Branch and Waverly Place are failing to meet accessibility standards and are showing signs of age. A significant effort will need to be made to preserve the integrity of these historical homes

## The Next Library Board:

We believe the following considerations should be made when selecting a new Library Board:

- Diversity in age, culture and language
- Keen commitment to services in the community
- A broad range of skills and experience, including education, human resources, accounting, legal, fundraising
- Ensure continuity in the Board
- Trustees from each Ward

