



SOLS | SBOS

Southern Ontario Library Service
Service des bibliothèques de l'Ontario-Sud

Stronger Libraries. Stronger Communities.
Enrichir nos bibliothèques, c'est enrichir nos communautés.

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February 19, 2019

Newmarket Public Library Board
c/o Todd Kyle, CEO
438 Park Avenue Newmarket, ON L3Y 1W1

Dear Members of the Newmarket Public Library Board,

Whether this is your first time appointed to your local public library board, or your third appointment, on behalf of Ontario's public libraries, we thank you for giving your time and energy to your community. We wish you every success as a member of your local public library board.

I am writing you on behalf of Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS). Some of you may be quite familiar with SOLS and the services that we offer public libraries on behalf of the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, and Sport. Some of you may be hearing about us for the first time! This letter is an opportunity to share with you an overview of what we do, how we can assist you in your board responsibilities, and highlight for you some of the ways SOLS contributes to strengthening the public library sector in Ontario.

The core mandate of Southern Ontario Library Service is to deliver programs and services to public libraries by:

- Increasing cooperation and coordination among public library boards and other information providers in order to promote the provision of library service to the public; and
- Assisting public library boards by providing them with services and programs that reflect their needs, including consultation, training and development.

In fulfilling this mandate, SOLS provides a variety of services, including: a range of training offerings for library staff and board members, both face-to-face and online; consulting assistance from professional staff; dynamic, relevant professional resources on a variety of topics of interest to library leaders and decision makers; opportunities for networking; and the facilitation of cost savings through collective purchasing and licensing. In addition, SOLS operates the province-wide interlibrary loan service, providing the technology and the vehicles to move library materials around the province.

You need to know that, at the beginning of a new term for library boards, and throughout your four-year term, SOLS is committed to providing the resources, tools and training you need to do your job as active and informed members of the library board.

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Of particular relevance to you is the recently launched Governance HUB, a joint initiative by SOLS, Ontario Library Service—North, the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, the Ontario Library Boards Association, and the Ontario Library Association. You will find the HUB at www.librarygovernance.ca – there you will find everything you need to know about public library governance in Ontario. While on the site, please sign up for the Governance HUB newsletter to stay informed on news and updates from Ontario’s public library organizations.

I would further like to invite you, as a library board, and your CEO to attend one of the upcoming regional workshops on *Governance Best Practices*. To be held in April and May at 14 locations across Southern Ontario, these 3-hour sessions are an excellent opportunity for new and returning board members and CEOs to learn about boardroom practices that support informed decision-making and strategic oversight. The sessions will be interactive, with lots of time for networking, as well as time to have valuable discussion with each other, weighing and sifting new approaches to doing things, and looking for ways to improve board functioning and decision-making. Registration is now open at www.librarygovernance.ca, where you will also find a list of the locations and dates.

SOLS facilitates Trustee Council meetings in eight different locations twice a year as an opportunity for board members to get together and learn about libraries and governance with and from neighbouring board members. Any board member who wishes to attend the meetings is welcome, but it is important for each library board to appoint one Trustee Council representative who will have a vote when it comes time to appoint someone from each Trustee Council to the SOLS Board. We ask that you take a few minutes at your next board meeting to appoint a Trustee Council representative and forward that person’s name and contact info to trustees@sols.org.

In summary, I would ask that you, individually or collectively, visit and explore the Governance Hub at www.librarygovernance.ca, sign up for the Governance HUB newsletter, register for one of the upcoming workshops, and appoint a Trustee Council representative to attend future Trustee Council meetings on behalf of your board. Because of the governance workshops taking place this spring, the next Trustee Council meetings will take place in fall 2019.

I assure you that the asks identified in the paragraph above will help you and your board be more knowledgeable, better informed, better connected, and ultimately, more effective. This, in turn, makes your library more successful!

In closing, I encourage you to stay connected through the Governance HUB and Trustee Council meetings. If you have any questions about SOLS, or anything I’ve mentioned, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Sincerely,



CEO
Southern Ontario Library Service