

Report to / Rapport au:

**Ottawa Public Library Board
Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa**

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File Number: OPLB-2017-0403

SUBJECT: Governance Evaluation Report and Action Plan

OBJET: Rapport d'évaluation de la gouvernance et plan d'action

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Receive the Governance Evaluation Report (October 2016) for information (Document 1); and,**
- 2. Approve the Governance Evaluation Action Plan.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa :

- 1. Prenne connaissance du rapport d'évaluation de la gouvernance (octobre 2016) pour information (document 1); et**
- 2. Adopte le plan d'action d'évaluation de la gouvernance.**

BACKGROUND

In March 2016, the Ottawa Public Library Board (OPLB) approved a revised Board Policy OPLB-010 OPL Board Evaluations and Governance Reviews. The adopted policy included a requirement to complete a self-evaluation of the Board's performance at the beginning of the second and fourth years of each term of office. The purpose of these reviews is to assess the OPL Board performance, and develop recommendations for both the Board and CEO implementation.

OPL staff led the Board through the self-evaluation survey in 2016, subsequently engaging the services of Transform Management Consulting to complete confidential interviews with Trustees to gather insights on the Board's governance strengths and weaknesses. In addition, Transform Management Consulting observed the October 2016 Board meeting to gain a better understanding of the Board's procedures and behavioural dynamics.

In November 2016, the OPL Board approved the creation of an Ad-Hoc Committee on Governance to receive the consultant's report and work with staff to develop actions to address the recommendations emanating from the review.

DISCUSSION

In October 2016, Transform Management Consulting submitted the Ottawa Public Library Governance Evaluation Report (Document 1) for review and consideration. The Report included a summary of the Board Assessment Survey Results, as well as findings from the Interviews and Meeting Observation. Within the Report, the findings from the interviews and meeting observation are categorized in five key areas: Board Strengths, Role of the Board, Culture and Behaviour, Meeting Dynamics, and Meeting Information.

Overall, the OPL Board is performing very well, with relatively few weaknesses. On the survey of 67 questions, only four were rated below 4.0 (on a scale of 1 – 5 where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 is strongly agree). Where weaknesses exist, they were found to be in areas concerning governance protocols that are embedded in regulating Acts or policies (either at provincial or municipal levels), or within the OPL Board By-Laws.

Based on the findings, the Report includes six recommendations that could be implemented to improve effectiveness. The recommendations and respective responses and actions are as follows:

Recommendation 1:

Modify or expand the Board's involvement in strategic planning workshops or use generative governance discussions to explore the future of libraries and how this could impact the OPL.

Response to Recommendation 1: The use of generative discussions is a new concept to the Ottawa Public Library. It is a mode of thinking "... in which the board engages in deeper inquiry, exploring root causes, values, optional courses and new ideas."¹ To incorporate this into the OPL Board's strategic planning, staff recommend a four-phase process to occur May 2017 through October 2018. Led by external support, the process will include community engagement and will result in a set of Strategic Directions and Priorities for the 2019 – 2022 term of the Board. Proposed phases and timelines are as follows:

- **Strategic Planning session with OPL Board and Management:** high-level insights into current states of governance and library markets; presentation and conversation around future(s) states and drivers of change; facilitation of generative discussions around the value of the library; and co-creation of vision of success for the future. **Timeline: May 2017**
- **Community Engagement:** Obtain qualitative data from the public regarding their needs and wants from a public library. Through a variety of activities we will gather information to help determine how best the OPL can position itself to respond to customer needs / wants. Employees throughout the organization would be involved in gathering this data. **Timeline: October 2017**
- **Strategic Planning session with OPL Board:** Facilitated Sessions with the OPL Board and Management. The sessions will include insights derived from the community engagement activities, refreshing of drivers of change for the future, and facilitated conversation. The result of this would be information / concepts to develop the OPL Board Strategic Directions and Priorities, and may include action plans to support. **Timeline: April 2018**

¹ [Generative Governance: Interview with Richard Chait](https://www.aisa.or.ke/images/Governance_as_Leadership.pdf)
https://www.aisa.or.ke/images/Governance_as_Leadership.pdf

- **Report to OPL Board:** Final Strategic Directions and Priorities will be tabled at the last meeting of the OPL Board in the current term, to be approved by the new Board for the 2019 – 2022 Term. **Timeline: Fall 2018**

Recommendation 2:

Develop or enhance a policy and process for the Board to ensure that an effective succession planning process for the CEO is in place.

Response to Recommendation 2: The OPL has an informal protocol (shared with the OPL Board Chair, Deputy CEO, and Senior Management) with regards to CEO Succession. Staff recommend undertaking the following actions:

- Formalize the CEO Succession Plan including documentation of protocols for both short- and long-term / temporary, or unplanned absence of the CEO, as well as for a permanent change in CEO Leadership. **Timeline: June 2017**
- Review the CEO Succession Plan with the Ad-Hoc Committee on CEO Performance, and provide the approved succession plan to City of Ottawa Human Resources and the OPL Board Chair for record-keeping. **Timeline: September 2017**
- Review the OPL Board Policy OPLB-018 CEO Succession Planning to ensure it reflects a proactive approach to respond to both planned and unplanned permanent vacancies. **Timeline: October 2017**

Recommendation 3:

Ensure an emergency succession plan is developed for the senior executives of the Library.

Response to Recommendation 3: In 2016, the OPL began formalizing its Succession Management program as part of its Human Resources Strategy. This program focuses on the OPL Leadership Team, which extends from Senior Managers through to Coordinators and Supervisors. While the process is delegated to the CEO as per the OPL Board Policy OPLB-002 Delegation of Authority, staff recognize the need to inform the Board of actions and plans. Staff recommend undertaking the following action:

- Provide updates to the OPL Board on current succession activities / programs for senior management and program managers, as well as future actions under consideration. **Timeline: November 2017**

Recommendation 4:

Discuss what should be done to further enhance ongoing training for Trustees.

Response to Recommendation 4: OPL Board Policy OPLB-003 Trustee Orientation and Continuing Education provides guiding principles and details the program for continuing education, including conferences. Included in the policy is the requirement to develop annual continuing education programs for the Board. For 2016 / 2017, the plan was identified with respect to Board governance programs offered through the Federation of Ontario Libraries (FOPL), however, it was not clearly linked back to the Policy. Staff recommend undertaking the following actions:

- Develop and communicate an annual Continuing Education Plan for trustees to ensure clarity with respect to linkages. **Timeline: November 2017**
- Increase the frequency of OPL Board Educationals to one every two Board meetings (or five per year). **Timeline: Immediate**

Recommendation 5:

Develop a method for the Board to communicate to City Council any recommendations or suggestions it might have regarding succession planning for the Trustees and the Board Chair as it nears the end of its term.

Response to Recommendation 5: OPL Board Policy OPLB-016 Board Succession Planning documents the Board's role in communicating to Council any recommendations and suggestions for the next term of the Board. In keeping with the policy, staff recommend undertaking the following actions:

- Work with the Board Chair and Vice-Chair to ensure an updated Library Skills and Competency Profile is provided to City Council in Q2 of the final year of the Board's Term. **Timeline: June 2018**
- Encourage the use of the Library Skills and Competency Profile during the recruitment of Trustees to the Board. **Timeline: October 2018**

Recommendation 6:

Continue to assess and adjust the new Central Library decision-making process to ensure it yields the best results.

Response to Recommendation 6: As the key priority for the OPL Board, and an Ottawa City Council Term of Council priority, OPL staff have been working with the City of Ottawa to assess and adjust the decision-making process for the Central Library Development Project. As per decisions made at the January 31, 2017 OPL Board meeting, and subsequently approved by City Council on February 8, 2017, staff recommend undertaking the following actions:

- Create and establish a Governance Structure – as part of the Relationship Agreement. **Timeline: June 2017**
- Refine the decision-making for the Ottawa Central Library Development Project. **Timeline: June 2017**
- Dissolve the ad-hoc committee. **Timeline: Complete**
- Communicate the Board's role in the process (in next steps). **Timeline: June 2017**

CONSULTATION

OPL staff worked with the OPL Board Ad-Hoc Committee on Board Governance to review and better understand the results of the Governance Evaluation Report (2016) and suggest action items to address the recommendations.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

If the recommended action plan is approved as presented, external professional consulting services will be engaged to support the actions responding to Recommendation 1. Funding for these services is available in the existing OPL Budget.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts related to this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications related to this report.

BOARD PRIORITIES

This report is prepared in compliance with OPL Board Policy OPLB-0015 Board Evaluations and Governance Review.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 Ottawa Public Library Governance Evaluation Report 2016 (Transform Management Consulting)

DISPOSITION

Upon approval, the Manager, Planning and Board Support will lead the implementation of the action plan in accordance with the timelines identified.