

Policy: Operational - Friends of the Library

Department: Library

Effective Date: February 2014

Reviewed: September 2022

Next Year of Review: 2024

Policy Statement

The purpose of this policy is to define the roles and responsibilities of Friends groups within the Bruce County Public Library System.

Definitions

Friends of the Library groups within the Bruce County Public Library are non-profit organizations of volunteers who assist and support the goals of the Library. Friends of the Library may exist in support of the Bruce County Public Library system as a whole or a particular branch library. In this case, they may be known as Friends of the [name of Branch] Library.

For the purposes of this policy, the Friends of the Library may also be referred to as The Friends. Not-for-profit Friends organizations are created to benefit the library community. Activities of a not-for-profit Friends of the Library organization are without monetary gain except for engaging in revenue producing activities and earning a profit solely to further the principal objectives of the Bruce County Public Library.

Responsibility for Implementation

The responsibility for the implementation of this policy lies with the Library Director, acting according to the general policy established by the Board. This authority may be delegated to other staff by the Library Director.

Regulations

General Principles

Friends of the Library groups within the Bruce County Public Library are non-profit organizations of volunteers who aim to:

- a. Assist and support the goals of the Library
- b. Establish closer ties between the Library and its community
- c. Promote knowledge of, and interest in, the functions and resources of the Library and;
- d. Assist in raising funds for special projects beyond the scope of the Library budget.

The Board acknowledges the importance of the volunteer service provided by each Friends of the Library group in Bruce County.

All Bruce County Public Library Friends groups recognise that it is the responsibility of the Library Board and staff to set policies, to make administrative and operational decisions, and to direct and deliver services on behalf of the Library. Friends of the Library groups are not in any way a governing body of the Library's operations and are not involved in these activities.

Friends of the Library groups operate independently of the Bruce County Public Library Board. They do not represent or speak on behalf of the Bruce County Public Library Board. Friends of the Library groups will abide by all Board policies. Friends may set their own terms of reference, goals and objectives providing they do not conflict with those of the Bruce County Public Library Board as established under the Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990.

The Branch Supervisor of the branch associated with the Friends group attends each Friends meeting as a representative of Bruce County Public Library. Library staff attend Friends' meetings in an informational capacity and may not be a member of the group. Friends of the Library groups will ensure that meeting notices, agendas, and minutes are sent to the appropriate Branch Supervisor.

Friends of the Library Groups will formalise their existence before engaging in any activities by presenting themselves for approval at a regular meeting of the Bruce County Public Library Board.

Fundraising

The Bruce County Public Library and Friends of the Bruce County Public Library groups will work collaboratively to determine fundraising goals and priorities for the enhancement of the Library and its services. Branch Supervisors will bring funding needs to the Friends group in writing at least annually. Allocation of funds is at the discretion of the Friends group, however, the Library Director or designate may provide advice on allocation priorities and may refuse offers deemed inappropriate for the Library.

Friends of the Library groups raise funds primarily through group memberships, book sales, and special events. Friends of the Library organizations, recognized by the Board, must secure the approval of staff prior to conducting a book sale at a branch location. Book sales must be staffed by Friends of the Library Volunteers. Friends of the Library fundraising projects shall be taken on with the prior knowledge of the relevant Branch Supervisor, and the applicable library administration staff.

Fundraising does not include grant applications made on behalf of Bruce County Public Library or to support the Bruce County Public Library.

All money from fundraising efforts, such as book sales and membership drives will be handled by Friends of the Library Volunteers. Staff cannot collect or keep money on behalf of the volunteers, except when a Branch Supervisor has been designated as Treasurer as a last resort. Approval must be received by the Director prior to them being designated Treasurer of the group.

All items purchased by the Friends of the Library organisation are the property of the Bruce County Public Library. Funds may be used for special projects at the branches represented by The Friends with the prior approval of the Library Director. A Special Project Form must be signed by the relevant Friends' Chair and submitted by the relevant Branch Supervisor for approval.

Friends fundraising activities are not meant to replicate the work of library staff nor replicate expenditures in the annual operating budget, such as collection development. Friends' financial support for the Library is not a replacement for adequate public funding for Bruce County Public Library.

Membership timelines and dues may be set by individual Friends of the Library groups. Membership dues raised can be used to support their own organization.

Ongoing Responsibilities

Friends of the Library groups are required to meet at least once a year.

An annual report shall be forwarded to the Bruce County Public Library Board. It shall include a list of the executive of the Friends of the Library as well as a financial statement. This report should be submitted shortly after each year end.

The executive of each Friends of the Library will ensure that all necessary reports and statements are prepared and filed in a timely fashion.

Friends must have a minimum of four active members within their group. This includes a Chair and a Treasurer that is not a library staff member. This condition must be met within a 6-month period of the conception of a Friends group.

Library Responsibilities

Meeting space for Friends' meetings and special events will be provided subject to space availability.

Staff time and administrative support will be provided as deemed appropriate by the Library Director or designated staff member.

The Library will provide access to a photocopier for duplicating Minutes and other Friends documents without charge.

The Library will provide assistance with preparation or production of fundraising or promotional materials for The Friends free of charge within the limitations of available library staff and operational priorities.

Disbanding

If a Friends Group cannot fulfill the policy requirements and/or the decision to disband is reached by the group, then the group may disband.

In order to disband, groups need to send a *Letter of Intent* to the Library Director, submit financial documents for the previous year and transfer assets to the Bruce County Public Library.

The Bruce County Public Library Board has the right to require a Friends group to disband at any time should they be found in contravention of the policies and procedures of the Bruce County Public Library or Corporation of the County of Bruce.

Related Documents:

Public Libraries Act, R.S.O. 1990, CHAPTER P.44
Special Project Form