



## **Factsheet for Prospective Medicine Hat Public Library Trustees**

Thank you for entertaining the possibility of joining us on the MHPL Board. This factsheet is designed to highlight some of the positive aspects of becoming a trustee, and to give you a better sense of the kinds of activities you would be engaged in and the opportunities you would have. We hope to help you answer the question: "Is the role of trustee right for me?"

Trustees receive no remuneration, but the role can be very rewarding. We could provide quite a long list of benefits, but in the interests of brevity here are just two of the most important ones:

**As a trustee you'll have a chance to learn, and to apply some of the knowledge and skills that you already have.**

Libraries are all about learning and as a library trustee you will find yourself in a very rich learning environment. At a minimum, you will become better acquainted with the vast range of resources and services that are available through our library and you will become a much better-informed user of libraries, information and new media.

Trustees grapple with many interesting and important issues as we seek ways to make the library an even more attractive destination, and to meet a broader range of needs within the community. The library provides funding for Board members to travel to conferences and participate in workshops.

**As a trustee you'll be serving the community; you'll be doing something worthwhile, and you'll be part of something good.**

Medicine Hat has an excellent library and we operate in a great environment. We have a very strong administrative team and our frontline staff is widely recognized as the library's greatest asset.

We belong to the Shortgrass Library System which enables us to easily share resources with other libraries in this corner of the province. Libraries and systems are connected to one another through The Alberta Library, so that resources and expertise can be shared with public and post-secondary libraries all over Alberta.

We have a very positive relationship with the City of Medicine Hat, and we work closely with partners at the Esplanade, the College, the CCDA, and others.

The library board is a governing board, which means that the solutions that trustees arrive at in consultation with staff are implemented without the need to gain approval from another body. Our meetings themselves are positive and

productive, and we are continuously looking for ways to improve our own performance as a Board.

We have revamped the format of our Board meetings to deal with routine matters more quickly so that we can explore important topics at greater depth and hold mini-workshops for trustees.

### **Is the Role of Trustee Right for You?**

The key qualification for a library trustee is commitment to the library. Those of us who are serving as Board members are convinced that the library plays an important role in “fostering life-long learning and enhancing the vitality of the community” (to quote from our vision statement).

The Board sets direction and ensures that suitable policies are in place so that our library can come closer to achieving its full potential. Since we’re working at the planning and policy level, the role will appeal to those who feel comfortable making a contribution in meetings.

Our meetings typically require a regular commitment of three to four hours per month with additional related activities throughout the year that include volunteering at promotional events and fund development initiatives. If you would prefer a more “hands on” role, there are many rewarding volunteer opportunities available, such as projects of the Friends of the Library or delivering books to the homebound.

Most trustees will attend two meetings a month – the full Board meeting which is currently the first Wednesday at 7:00 pm, and a Committee meeting, either the Human Resources and Finance Committee or the Advocacy, Policy, Programs and Service Committee.

### **Next Step(s)**

Notices concerning a vacant position on the Library Board typically appear in the Medicine Hat News late September or early October. City Council reviews the applications and the successful candidate is notified in late fall. Please don't be discouraged if you are not selected your first time around – it is often the case that many well-qualified people apply but we hope you will try again!

There is a great deal of valuable information available online, and you might wish to do a bit of reading and research either at home or using one of the library's computers. Our website – [mhpl@shortgrass.ca](mailto:mhpl@shortgrass.ca) – and the Shortgrass site -- [www.shortgrass.ca](http://www.shortgrass.ca) -- are good places to begin. The Alberta Library Trustees Association also has an excellent site: [www.librarytrustees.ab.ca](http://www.librarytrustees.ab.ca).

Thank you for your interest! For more information please feel free to contact:  
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