

Board Discussion Starter

**Board Expenses**

Trustees bring a diversity of experiences, skills, knowledge, and questions to public library board work. Board policies and practices vary across the province and BCLTA is focused on common issues of common concern for board development. Your board chair, your library director, and BCLTA all have a role in helping you find further resources specific to your needs. The Libraries Branch staff are available for all questions regarding the *Library Act*.

Your board expenses discussions might cover a wide range of topics such as:

* Available board funds and expanding available funds.
* Policy development and oversight.
* Expenses and risk management.
* Professional development needs and outcomes.
* Out of pocket expenses related to board work.
* Developing an accessible and inclusive board.

**Resources**

[BCLTA Board Discussion Starter](https://www.bclta.ca/resources-links/board-discussion-starters/): Board Development and Evaluation

Alberta: Public Library Services Branch

* [Public Library Board Policies](https://www.alberta.ca/Public-library-board-policies.aspx)
* This resource is in regards to the legislative requirements of Alberta and is not applicable to the BC Library Act. Any questions regarding the BC Library Act are to be referred to the BC Libraries Branch.
* The board policies referred to in this resource, including a policy regarding board expenses is highly recommended for BC public library boards.

Gibsons and District Public Library

* [Board Development Committee Terms of Reference](https://gibsons.bc.libraries.coop/files/2013/12/Board-Development-Committee-Terms-Of-Reference-1.pdf) (2018)
* Description of types of board development that may require funding.

[Building Your Board Development Committee](https://www.thevantagepoint.ca/resources/building-your-board-development-committee)

* Vantage Point (2016)
* Toolkit for building a strong committee – one of the components for knowing why and where to spend board development funds.

Imagine Canada

* [Board Compensation](http://sectorsource.ca/standards-community/standards-reference-guide/standard-a19-board-compensation)
* [Board Compensation Explained](http://sectorsource.ca/resource/glossary/standard-a19-explained)
* While this is not directly applicable to BC public library boards, which operate according the BC Library Act, there is language regarding the ethics of why board directors are not compensated for their work.
* For some boards, a discussion as to why this is a volunteer role is critical to understanding need for policy and procedures regarding reimbursement for pre-approved expenses and planned expenses for board meeting costs such as meals and child care.

Imagine Canada

* [Board Development](http://sectorsource.ca/standards-community/standards-reference-guide/standard-a23-board-development)
* [Board Development Explained](http://sectorsource.ca/resource/glossary/standard-a23-explained)
* While this is not directly applicable to BC public library boards, which operate according the BC Library Act, there are important points made regarding the need for a board development plan that is aligned with organizational priorities, supports individual trustee development and board success, and is purposeful in the use of organizational funds for board expenses.

**Board Policies**

Greater Victoria Public Library

* [Policy 3.10, Travel, Education & Other Allowable Expenses](https://www.gvpl.ca/board-policies/3-10-travel-expenses/) (2008)
* Good example of plain language which is important in policy development for ensuring use and applicability and future evaluation and review of the policy.

North Vancouver District Public Library

* [Board and Staff Expenses](https://nvdpl.ca/sites/default/files/var/www/html/sites/default/files/B-FIN-25_Board%20and%20Staff%20Expenses_0.pdf) (October 2017)
* [Management Guidelines for Board and Staff Expenses](https://nvdpl.ca/sites/default/files/var/www/html/sites/default/files/MG-FIN-25_Board%20and%20Staff%20Expenses_0.pdf) (October 2017)
* Strong example of the purpose and structure of board policy and management guidelines.
* Thorough and useful templates for public library boards.

Squamish Public Library

* [Policy Manual](https://squamish.bc.libraries.coop/files/2013/05/Policy-manual-2016.pdf) (2015) 2.16 Trustee Conference Attendance and Travel (p. 21)
* Clearly outlines expectations of trustee attending conferences and events, such as providing a report; what the trustee can expect from the board for supporting their professional development; eligible expenses; and the process for pre-approval and reimbursement.

Surrey Libraries

* [Appendix A: Expense Reimbursement](https://www.surreylibraries.ca/sites/default/files/SurreyLibrariesPolicyManual.pdf)
* Note the applicability to both board and staff.

Terrace Public Library

* [5.11 Board Member Expenses](http://www.terracelibrary.ca/file/1462990408.pdf)
* See Section 4.4, Expenses: “In this policy, the word employee shall be read as trustee.”
* Same policy for staff and trustees.
* Note the use of [BC government travel expenses](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/careers-myhr/all-employees/pay-benefits/expenses-allowances/travel) rate for mileage and per diem.

Vancouver Island Regional Library

* [Board of Trustees Procedural Policy](http://virl.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2017-09-16AdoptedBoardProceduralBylaw.pdf) (2017) Reimbursement of Trustee Expenses (p. 8)
* Note the barrier reducing language regarding “reasonable travelling and out of pocket expenses, including child care expenses”.

*1) The members of a library board are not entitled to be paid by the library board for their services but may be reimbursed by it for reasonable travelling and out of pocket expenses, including child care expenses, necessarily incurred by them in performing their duties under this Act.*

*2) A library board may not reimburse a member for any expenses if another body reimburses the member for the expenses or pays the expenses.*

West Vancouver Memorial Library

[Board Policy Manual](https://www.thevantagepoint.ca/resources/building-your-board-development-committee) (2018) Expense Reimbursement (p. 3-25)

* Important inclusion of “Trustees are not entitled to be paid for their services” and expenses “necessarily incurred by them in performing their duties under the Library Act”
* Note similar language to VIRL policy regarding “out of pocket expenses, including child care expenses” as BC public library board policies should have similar intent and language amended for local context and library type.

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Contact BCLTA to add your resources, templates, or policies to this Discussion Starter.