

GRAND VALLEY PUBLIC LIBRARY

Media Communications Policy

Introduction

Grand Valley Public Library is committed to developing and maintaining professional working relationships with the media to help promote public awareness and understanding of GVPL's initiatives, programs and services.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure professionalism and consistency in how GVPL works with the media to manage both proactive and reactive media communications. In doing so, the policy outlines who can interact with the media in an official capacity, on behalf of GVPL.

Scope

This policy applies to all full time and part time staff of Grand Valley Public Library including casual and temporary employees. The policy also applies equally to volunteers in Grand Valley Public Library's programs.

This policy applies equally to the members of the Grand Valley Public Library Board. However, while they also volunteer their time, as members of the Board they have roles and responsibilities that are distinct from those of other volunteers.

Definitions

Media:

Refers to all forms of media including traditional news (print, radio, TV) and online channels including websites and blogs that publish news, investigative reports, analysis, events and/or general information.

Spokesperson:

Unless otherwise stated, in all circumstances the spokesperson for GVPL shall be the CEO/ Chief Librarian. Alternatively, she/he may delegate their responsibilities to an appropriately trained, subject matter expert.

In the absence of the CEO/ Chief Librarian, the GVPL Board Chair shall also have the authority to act as a spokesperson in the areas of policy, Council relations, budgets, capital projects, labour relations and Board affairs.

Individual Board members' interaction with the media must recognize the limitation and inability of any Board member or group of Board members to speak for the Board. As and when extraordinary situations arise, it is the Board Chair who speaks on behalf of the Board to the media.

Procedure

Proactive Media Communications:

All GVPL initiated proactive media relations activities will be coordinated by the CEO/Chief Librarian.

Reactive Media Communications:

Requests for interviews will be scheduled with the CEO/Chief Librarian.

Board Members, staff and volunteers who are contacted by the media should state that they are not authorized to speak to the media and forward the enquiry to the CEO/Chief Librarian. Should the CEO/Chief Librarian be unavailable, the staff person dealing with the initial enquiry should ask for the following information:

- Name of journalist and publication
- Contact details
- Deadline for response
- Topic/ Request details

Known or potentially contentious issues

In dealing with known or potentially contentious issues the CEO/Chief Librarian may also contact the Town of Grand Valley for support, advice and guidance in preparation for such media interviews.

Emergencies

In the event of all emergencies, all staff and members of the GVPL Board will be informed about major decisions and necessary actions through existing operational processes and various communication channels. Information will also be posted on the GVPL website.

Library Emergencies

In the event of a localized crisis or emergency (i.e. bomb threats, fire, flooding, power failure, inclement weather, etc.) GVPL will communicate during and after the event. The intent of the communication is to maintain and restore public confidence in the Library

Community Emergencies

In the case of uncommon emergencies involving the Library and beyond, GVPL will be guided by the GVPL Emergency Preparedness Plan and the Fire Safety Plan provided by the Town of Grand Valley. Examples of such emergencies include natural emergencies such as extensive flooding, tornadoes, blizzards, etc. and human-caused emergencies such as transportation accidents involving hazardous materials, aircraft or rail crashes, electrical power blackouts or any other incident accidentally or willfully caused by a person which is likely to endanger property, health, safety, and welfare of the community.

Where necessary, the CEO/Chief Librarian may defer media communications to the Town of Grand Valley who may act as the primary media contact on behalf of the Town of Grand Valley and Grand Valley Public Library.

Related Documents:

Grand Valley Public Library. *Governance Policy: Duties and Responsibilities of Individual Board Members*

Reviewed/Approved: June 2017

Reviewed/Approved: October 2020

Next scheduled Review: October 2023