

## Department 44 – Library Services

---

### Overview

The Selwyn Public Library consists of branches located in Bridgenorth, Ennismore, and Lakefield and a Makerspace which opened in 2022. The four locations work closely together, sharing staff, resources, and programming.

Selwyn Public Library operates under the direction of a seven-member Library Board appointed by the Township of Selwyn. The Board is governed by the Public Libraries Act and other relevant legislation and has the authority of full management and control of Selwyn Public Library. It assumes with that authority, the duty to develop policies related to the framework, governance, and operation of the Library.

Our staffing model consists of a full-time CEO/Chief Librarian, three full-time Branch Librarians, a full-time Children's Programming Coordinator, a full-time Makerspace Coordinator, a part-time Assistant Librarian, and the support of over 150 volunteers. The Township Manager of Financial Services also serves as Treasurer to the Library Board. The combination of branch-specific and more skill-oriented positions allows us to continue our traditional approach but also adapt to changing expectations on the part of our users.

The goal in compiling this budget is to continue providing a consistent level of Library service to the community and to appropriately allocate funding and resources in accordance with the 2021-2025 Selwyn Public Library Strategic Plan, while having regard for 2026-2030 strategic plan.

### Activity Update – Beyond Budget Dollars & Cents

In 2025, the Board undertook the development of the Library's 2026–2030 Strategic Plan. This work was guided by a dedicated Strategic Planning Subcommittee, which conducted a thorough review of the previous strategic plan, legacy planning documents, and relevant reports. To further inform this process, the Board engaged an external consultant to lead community consultations, including public surveys and focus groups.

The resulting Strategic Plan establishes a clear framework to guide decision-making, resource allocation, and service development over the next five years. It identifies priority areas that will shape the Library's future direction, ensuring programs, services, and investments are aligned with evolving community needs, organizational capacity, and long-term sustainability. By articulating shared goals and measurable objectives, the Plan provides a roadmap for growth, accountability, and continuous improvement, positioning Selwyn Public Library to respond proactively to change while remaining focused on its core mission and values.

## Department 44 – Library Services

---

Volunteerism continues to present challenges for the Library. Volunteer support has long been a cornerstone of the Library's ability to provide consistent, high-quality services to the community. Volunteers contribute thousands of hours annually, supporting day-to-day operations such as circulation assistance, program support, shelving, outreach activities, and special events. However, the climate of volunteerism has shifted significantly in recent years. Across the nonprofit and public sectors, organizations are experiencing increased difficulty in attracting, training, and retaining volunteers. Factors contributing to this shift include changing work patterns, increased economic pressures on households, reduced availability of retirees, and evolving expectations around flexibility, training, and support. As a result, volunteer participation is less predictable and requires substantially more staff time and financial investment to sustain.

Where volunteerism once offset staffing needs with minimal overhead, the current environment requires increased investment in volunteer recruitment, onboarding, training, supervision, and retention efforts. Staff must dedicate more time to coordinating, training, and scheduling volunteers. Additionally, higher volunteer turnover necessitates repeated training and orientation, increasing operational costs.

In an era when volunteerism can no longer be assumed as a stable or unlimited resource, it is important to recognize the evolving realities of sustaining a volunteer-reliant service model. As Council considers future budgets and long-term service planning, continued awareness of these challenges will be essential. Thoughtful, strategic investment over time will help ensure the Library remains operationally resilient, able to adapt to changing patterns of volunteer engagement, and positioned to continue delivering reliable, equitable library services to the community.

### Revenue

Revenues to support the Library come from four primary sources: a constant provincial operating grant, donations, fundraising initiatives, reserves, and taxation.

The attached summary provides an overview of how the fundraising revenue dollars have been utilized to provide enhanced Library services and programs.

In 2025, the Library Board committed to and successfully delivered its second Twilight Golf Fundraiser, exceeding the fundraising target presented to Council for the 2025 fiscal year and generating over \$9,500 in revenue. While the event was successful and demonstrated strong community support, the Board has decided to pause the Golf Fundraiser for one year.

This decision reflects a growing awareness of the cumulative impact that repeated requests for sponsorships and donations can have on small, local

## Department 44 – Library Services

---

businesses. Many of these businesses are regularly approached by multiple community organizations, and continued solicitation places additional strain on their financial and administrative capacity. By stepping back temporarily, the Board aims to be respectful of the local business community while exploring more sustainable and balanced approaches to fundraising that do not disproportionately rely on the same supporters year after year.

In 2026, we anticipate that funds will be raised through a variety of channels including new-to-you store revenue, Library book sales, our online giving and donation page, our annual Christmas craft and Vendor Show, an online donation and fundraising page, and 2-3 Board-driven Fundraising events.

Despite volunteer scheduling challenges, our two new-to-you stores located in Bridgenorth and Ennismore, operated in partnership with Community Care Chemong, had a remarkable year, raising \$35,661.84 for the library and Community Care. The stores have recently introduced debit/credit machines, which we anticipate will also boost our sale revenue.

I also continue to explore and apply for grants that can assist with mitigating some of our operational and budgetary pressures (Trillium, Canada Summer Jobs, Summer Experience Program, and Seniors Community Grant). I continue to explore grant opportunities that would assist us in maintaining service levels and enhancing the Library programs and services that we are currently able to offer to our community.

Volunteer hours could also be viewed as a donation of time and in 2025, volunteers contributed 15,440 hours to the Library and our two new-to-you stores. Using the average base salary for a Library Technician in Ontario (\$28.37), the Library saved \$438,028.80 in wages alone in 2025.

### Expenses

Similar to other Township departments, the Library continues to experience significant inflationary pressures across a range of operating expenses. Rising costs are being felt in essential areas such as volunteer recognition, library equipment and maintenance, courier and postage services, office supplies, and the delivery of public programs. These increases reflect broader market conditions, including higher transportation costs, supply chain pressures, and increased service fees, all of which directly affect the Library's operational capacity.

The cost of library materials has also increased substantially. Both physical and electronic resources are subject to ongoing price increases from publishers and vendors, often outpacing general inflation. While a nominal increase has been proposed for the materials budget, this adjustment does not fully offset actual cost growth. Without funding that keeps pace with these increases, the Library

## Department 44 – Library Services

---

faces difficult trade-offs that may impact service levels, including reduced purchasing power for new and replacement materials, longer wait times for high-demand items, limited programming offerings, limitations on maintaining, upgrading, or expanding technology and digital access for the public. Over time, these pressures risk diminishing the quality, accessibility, and responsiveness of library services that residents rely on.



## Fundraising Receipts Allocation

Revenues Budgeted in 2026 47,500

---

### Fundraising Support/Expenses:

Remit half of Thrift Shop Revenues to Community Care	3,250	
Remit half of Treasure Trove Revenues to Community Care	12,500	
Library Share of Treasure Trove Direct Expenses	1,500	
Internet - Treasure Trove	1,000	
Debit Machine - Treasure Trove	550	
Phone Line Costs for Treasure Trove (safety)	490	
General Fundraising Expenses	2,000	
General Fundraising Expenses - Canada Helps fees	400	
	<hr/>	21,690

### Capital Improvements

Nothing planned in 2026 for Volunteer support.	0	
	<hr/>	0

### Enhanced Library Services:

Cloud Library - Streaming & Audiobooks	7,650	
	<hr/>	7,650

### Enhanced Programming:

Student/Part time Support - residual after federal grant (wages & benefits)	9,310	
Reading Club Materials (additional copies)	2,600	
Programming - Children, Adult and Makerspace (50%)	6,250	
	<hr/>	18,160

Total Fundraising Used for Enhanced Services & Programming 47,500