

Purpose:

This policy recognizes that the exchange of information between Britannia Community Centre, its Board of Management and news gathering organizations can provide a conduit to our community. Our part in this relationship is to be responsive and accurate.

BOARD MEETING OCTOBER 2004: "NO BOARD MEMBER SHALL SPEAK FOR, OR ON BEHALF OF BRITANNIA COMMUNITY SERVICES CENTRE WITHOUT THE EXPRESS PRIOR APPROVAL OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS. ALL ENQUIRIES FROM THE PUBLIC MEDIA SHALL BE REFERRED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OR TO THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR, IF NECESSARY, TO A REPRESENTATIVE APPOINTED BY THE BOARD.

Policy Statements:

1. Open Community Centre

The Britannia Community Centre is an open site and acts cooperatively with news media pursuing stories in the public interest. This is a guiding principle in our relations with the news media.

2. Media Calls Are Important

Media calls must be given a high priority and should be dealt with quickly at every level of the organization. Reasons for this include:

- Media are always on a deadline, which may be a matter of days or weeks for a magazine reporter or, quite literally, minutes for radio reporters. -If the Britannia Centre is not able to get out its side of a story, the media will often publish or broadcast whatever opinion it has managed to gather. -The media are customers, and the treatment they receive is reflected in a very public way.

If an answer to a question cannot be found quickly, the media should be informed.

3. Media Contacts

All media calls will be directed to the president of the board or to the executive director (or to a representative appointed by the board).

Under no circumstances should any staff or board member speak on policy or budget directives that are strictly within the jurisdiction of the Executive Director or the President of Britannia Centre's Board, unless the Board has granted their approval.

4. Roles and Responsibilities of Executive Director

The Executive Director will deal with the media regarding all personnel issues.

The Executive Director needs to ensure that staff who may come in contact with the media know who the dedicated media contacts are, what issues that they are responsible for responding to, and how they can be reached at all times.

Further responsibilities include:

- A dedicated media contact and back-up for holidays and illness is designated and that staff know who this person(s) is/are.
- Ensure that staff who may be answering the phone know that factual media requests can quickly turn to interpretative ones and at such points, staff need to ensure that the appropriate media contact person is notified.

5. Photographers and Video Cameras at the Britannia Centre

- No one is allowed to photograph or shoot video in the Britannia Centre without prior authorization from the Executive Director.
- No photograph or video sequence is permitted involving Britannia staff without their prior consent. If their consent is sought a copy of the completed photo-release form used by the photographer must be filed with the Executive Director.
- The Executive Director and the President of the Board of Management must be informed of all photo events, even after if it is "after the fact".

6. Communication during Emergency Situations

- The Executive Director or a designated staff person will contact the President of Britannia Centre's Board of Management. Depending of the nature of the incident, both the Executive Director and the President will determine if other contacts, if at all, need to be made.
- In the event of an emergency, the Executive Committee of the Board will determine what other communications are necessary.

7. Confidentiality

While it is important to be forthright with media's requests for information, the Executive Director and the President of the Board of Directors should use appropriate discretion when dealing with confidential issues. Personal information should be protected at all times. Never give home phone numbers without prior consultations with any individuals that are concerned.

Approved January 2005