

## Terms of Reference

### Poet Laureate for the City of Kingston

#### Goals

The appointment of a Poet Laureate for the City of Kingston is intended to recognize and honour individual achievement in poetry, to create a spokesperson for the literary arts in our City and to foster expression of the life of our community. The position of the Poet Laureate will increase awareness of Kingston as a centre of writing excellence and increase the profile of the literary arts within the City and beyond.

#### Duties

The Poet Laureate will act as literary ambassador for the City of Kingston. They will be required to write one new, original poem each year of their appointment that addresses or reflects one or more aspects of life in the City, to be read (by the Poet Laureate or delegate) on the occasion of the Mayor's annual New Year's Day Levee. The Poet Laureate will give the City a limited license to publish these poems in hard copy and electronic forms, including on the City website, for the term of the appointment.

The Poet Laureate will be present and read a selection of poetry (which may be authored by them or another poet) at no fewer than three of the following public events (or equivalent ones) each year:

- Mayor's Levee;
- First Capital Day/Canada Day;
- Events associated with National Poetry Month; and
- Any other civic ceremonies and/or official functions as deemed appropriate by invitation.

Furthermore, the Poet Laureate will serve as an advocate for literature and for literacy, and will be expected to participate in the literary life of the City.

The intellectual rights to writing produced by the Poet Laureate during their tenure are the property of the Poet Laureate.

#### Term

The Poet Laureate will be appointed for a term coinciding with the tenure of City Council, at present 4 years.

#### Support

The Poet Laureate will receive an annual honorarium of \$2,350 for each year of their term.

The Poet Laureate will liaise with the City through the Cultural Services Department. City staff will provide orientation to the newly appointed Poet Laureate. They will be provided with a business card, City e-mail and mailing addresses, and occasional clerical, legal or technical support as required to fulfill their duties. The City will post the Poet Laureate's annual poem for the Mayor's Levee on its website, along with other material mutually agreed by the City and the Poet Laureate.

## **Eligibility and Appointment Criteria**

Candidates must:

- hold a record of high achievement in poetry demonstrated by peer and/or public recognition;
- have published of a minimum of one book of poetry (not including self-publication), and other publications that display literary excellence;
- live and/or work in the City of Kingston (if the Poet Laureate leaves the City permanently, or is absent for a period greater than one year during their term, they must relinquish the position); and
- be willing to fulfill the responsibilities of the position.

Appointment Criteria:

- the quality and character of the poet's work;
- significant contribution to poetry and the literary life of the City of Kingston;
- knowledge and understanding of Kingston indicating a capacity to capture the life, times and place in poetry; and
- personal qualities and stature to effectively fulfill the ambassadorial duties of the Poet Laureate.

## **Appointment Process**

The City of Kingston's Arts Advisory Committee will appoint a Poet Laureate Working Group comprised of 3 to 5 people, which may include the outgoing Poet Laureate, writers, publishers, book sellers, teachers, librarians, journalists, and/or any member of the public with suitable knowledge of poetry, and that must include at least one member of the Arts Advisory Committee.

The Poet Laureate Working Group will deliberate and identify a candidate in accordance with the Eligibility and Appointment Criteria as defined. The Poet Laureate Working Group will work with City staff to confirm the willingness of their candidate to serve in this role and has the authority, on behalf of City Council, to appoint the Poet Laureate they have selected. The Poet Laureate Working Group is also responsible for providing a short written statement (80 to 150 words) highlighting the reasons for their selection.

The appointment process will be completed to coincide with the tenure of a new City Council and a public announcement of the new Poet Laureate will be made by the Mayor during an open session of Council and should take place no later than December 31<sup>st</sup> following the election of a new City Council.