Board Meeting

Wed Jul 16, 2025 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM EDT

Last motion 25-27

1. Call to order & introductions

A regular meeting of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board was called to order at 7:00pm

Present: Ilze Andzans (remote), Benoit Beausoleil, Susan Elliott, Robin Foster, Wayne Scott (Co-Chair), Heloisa Varesio, Adriana Vizzari (Town Council Representative)

Staff: Debbie Krause (Community Engagement Coordinator), Laura Tait (CEO)

Regrets: Daryl Novak (Co-Chair), Katie Wiens

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION 25-28: Moved by B. Beausoleil that the agenda be approved. **CARRIED**

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

4. Delegations

None

5. May 20th, 2025, Board Meeting Draft Minutes

MOTION 25-29: Moved by H. Varesio that May 20th, 2025, board minutes be approved. **CARRIED**

6. Operational Updates

W. Scott reflected on the past year and the progress made, highlighting the strides taken as a board-staff team and expressing appreciation for the collaborative efforts of both board members and staff.

6.1. Staff Report

L. Tait presented the July Staff Report reporting that the Ultimate Summer Kickoff was a major success and summer programming is now underway both onsite and offsite through Play in the Park. She also shared updates on recent community partnerships, staffing changes, a successful Seniors Community Grant, and upcoming events including Learn & Live and Culture Days. It was also noted that the presentation to Council has been rescheduled for September due to Council's July agenda already being very full.

A. Vizzari offered to share any important announcements with Council on behalf of the library.

I. Andzans expressed disappointment that no board members were invited to attend the Wind Phone ceremony.

6.2. 225th Anniversary

L. Tait presented a highlight video from the Ultimate Summer Kickoff celebrating the Library's 225th Anniversary. She noted the certificate received from MPP Wayne Gates and the plaque from the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake in recognition of 225 years of service, and reported on an upcoming anniversary event and commemorative publication.

6.3. Media Coverage Report

L. Tait reported on the positive media coverage in both local newspapers highlighting the 225th anniversary event and the wind phone installation.

6.4. Q2 Statistics Report

L. Tait reported continued growth across most areas despite plans for a maintenance year, with major Q2 events including Wine & Words, the Summer Kickoff, and the Ocean Dome. She noted a decline in new memberships, likely due to fewer library card sign-ups during school visits, and shared that the Virgil locker service has been temporarily suspended for the summer due to limited access during Town-run camps.

6.5. Q2 Operational Plan Update

L. Tait reported that while most areas of the operational plan are progressing well, the time and resources required for the rebrand, Summer Kickoff, major events, and unexpected grant successes have impacted capacity, and some goals may need to be adjusted. She highlighted ongoing successes in digital literacy and community engagement, noted delays in the Branching Out framework and Glendale expansion, and shared updates on the rebrand, website redesign, and continued momentum from the 225th anniversary celebrations. Work on HR and financial sustainability goals will begin this quarter.

6.6. Correspondence

None

7. Board Education: Educational Resources

L. Tait provided a reminder overview of the educational resources available to Board members.

ACTION: L. Tait to provide presentation slides to all board members.

8. Business Arising

8.1. Finance Committee

L. Tait presented the Q2 financial update, noting continued strength in donations and fundraising, though a slowdown is expected in Q3. She reported that planned salary reallocations have begun to address the reserve deficit, and most capital projects remain ongoing.

8.2. Advocacy & Fundraising Committee

R. Foster provided an update from the committee's June meeting.

ACTION: L. Tait to order new name badges for board members with the new brand.

ACTION: All board members are asked to send 25 words or less to D. Krause by July 31st sharing why you love the library for inclusion in the Lake Report anniversary article.

8.3. Governance Committee

W. Scott reported on the Governance Committee's June meeting.
MOTION 25-30: Moved by W. Scott to approve GOV-11 and GOV-12 as presented. **CARRIED**

ACTION: GOV-12 will be reviewed in one year, as the board succession and appointment processes are confirmed in consultation with the new CAO.

8.4. Strategic Plan Working Group

W. Scott provided an update on strategy plan progress and outlined the planned timeline.

9. Community Engagement & Inquiries

W. Scott noted that D. Novak sent a congratulatory email to newly appointed CAO Nick Ruller, which was well received.

ACTION: The Board requested that D. Novak send a message of congratulations and appreciation to Bruce Zvaniga on the occasion of his retirement.

10. Other Business

None

11. Meeting Termination

MOTION 25-31: Moved by B. Beausoleil that the meeting be terminated at 8:44pm. **CARRIED**