Board Meeting

Tue May 20, 2025 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM EDT

Last motion 25-20

1. Call to order and introductions

A regular meeting of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board was called to order at 6:59pm.

Present: Benoit Beausoleil (remote), Susan Elliott, Daryl Novak (Co-Chair), Wayne Scott (Co-Chair), Katie Wiens

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

Regrets: Ilze Andzans, Robin Foster, Heloisa Varesion, Adriana Vizzari (Town Council Representative)

2. Approval of Agenda

MOTION 25-21: Moved by D. Novak that the agenda be approved as amended. **CARRIED**

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

4. Delegations

None

5. April 16th, 2025, Board Meeting Draft Minutes

MOTION 25-22: Moved by K. Wiens that April 16th, 2025 board minutes be approved. **CARRIED**

6. Operational Updates

6.1. Staff Report

L. Tait presented the May Staff Report, highlighting strong spring programming, including the success of the Ocean Wise Sea Dome event and the Learn & Live speaker series featuring Shaw Festival CEO Tim Jennings. She also noted increased school engagement, upcoming summer initiatives tied to the 225th anniversary, and recent success with grant funding to expand digital literacy programs. The library will be employing two summer students for an eight-week term during the summer. It was also noted that two staff members will be leaving the library in August.

6.2. Media Coverage Report

L. Tait reported on the media coverage from both newspapers.

6.3. New Visual Identity

L. Tait presented the library's new visual identity and branding. W. Scott noted that the new branding was inline with the library's vision.

6.4. Correspondence

None

7. Board Education: Education Resources

Deferred to the July board meeting.

8. Business Arising

8.1. Finance Committee

L. Tait provided an update on the 2025 budget, noting strong progress to date, including successful fundraising efforts and successful grant applications. She explained that most donations are directed and already accounted for, with much of the funding tied to initiatives related to the library’s 225th anniversary.

MOTION 25-23: Moved by D. Novak that the library board move into in camera session to consider matters that qualify under the Public Libraries Act: Section 16. 1. 4. b personal matters about an identifiable individual. **CARRIED**

MOTION 25-24: Moved by K. Wiens that the library board rise from in-camera session. **CARRIED**

MOTION 25-25: Moved by B. Beausoleil that the board approve the following transfers to and from library reserve funds to be included in the 2024 year-end financial statements, as recommended by Town Finance. These transfers are consistent with the relevant provincial regulations.
- a transfer of $131,333.33 from the Library Development Reserve to the operating budget, and
-a transfer of $9,000.00 from the operating budget to the Trisha Romance Art Reserve.
CARRIED

8.2. Advocacy & Fundraising Committee

S. Elliott provided an update on the committee's most recent meeting. The meeting with Kevin MacLean of The Lake Report was successful, and the paper has offered to produce a 4–8 page pull-out in honour of the library's 225th anniversary. Talks are in the early stages with St. Davids Public School regarding the library’s participation in their upcoming

Heritage Fair. It was also noted that the Mountainview Lemonade Stand will be part of the Summer Kickoff event, helping to raise funds for Family and Children's Services (FACS).

8.3. Governance Committee

W. Scott presented an update on the Governance Committee's meeting.

MOTION 25-26: Moved by D. Novak to approve GOV-05 as presented. **CARRIED**

8.4. Board Effectiveness

W. Scott facilitated a discussion on the Board’s ongoing work plans and evaluation process.

Evaluation policy

To be reviewed at a later date by the governance committee.

Draft Board Work Plan

D. Novak requested CEO annual evaluation be included in the governance portion of the plan.

W. Scott reminded the Board to be mindful of staff workloads during this particularly busy time, especially as the team is still operating with reduced numbers. D. Novak also noted that individual Board members cannot direct staff and that all direction must come collectively through the Board.

ACTION: Each committee to review the draft work plan and complete Q1 and Q2 progress to bring back to the July board meeting.

Potential for on-going feedback on effectiveness

The board agreed that there is no immediate need to implement a formal feedback process at this time.

8.5. Strategic Plan: Community Survey

W. Scott and L. Tait reported that they, along with H. Varesio and S. Bowers, met to begin developing a community survey as part of the strategic planning process. The survey will launch at the Summer Kickoff event and run through June into mid-July. Results will be compiled and presented to the Board in September.

8.6. Land Acknowledgement

K. Wiens recommended that the library adopt the Town’s land acknowledgement, including posting it on the website and incorporating it into public meetings and events. The Board discussed the potential adoption of the Town’s land acknowledgement. While recognizing the importance of some form of meaningful recognition, the Board felt that adopting the Town's approach without appropriate policy or guidance is not advisable. Given the library's developing relationship with the Niagara Regional Native Centre, the Board supports staff in further exploring this partnership and agreed that the use of a land acknowledgement should be revisited in the future, informed by that relationship.

9. Community Engagement & Inquiries

None

10. Other Business

None

11. Meeting Termination

MOTION 25-27: Moved by K. Wiens that the meeting be terminated at 8:30pm. **CARRIED**