Last motion 26-28

Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library

NOTLPL Board Meeting

Wed Sep 16, 2026 5:30 PM - 7:30 PM EDT

1. Call to order

A regular meeting of the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board was called to order at 5:31pm by W. Scott.

Present: Benoit Beausoleil, Susan Elliott, Daryl Novak, Wayne Scott, Adriana Vizzari (Town Council Representative)

Remote: Robin Foster, Maria Mavridis (Town Council Representative), Heloisa Varesio,

Staff: Samantha Bruce (Administrative Assistant), Debbie Krause (Community Engagement Coordinator), Laura Tait (CEO)

Regrets: Katie Wiens

2. Approval of agenda

MOTION 26-29: Moved by D. Novak that the agenda be approved as amended. **CARRIED**

3. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

None

4. June 17, 2026 Board Meeting Minutes

MOTION 26-30: Moved by A. Vizzari that June 17, 2026 board minutes be approved. **CARRIED**

5. 2027 Budget Proposal

L. Tait presented the proposed 2027 operating and capital budgets. Key highlights included a proposed municipal funding request of $988,068, representing a 6.7% increase over 2026, increased reserve contributions to support collection development and technology replacement, and the creation of a full-time Child & Youth Services Coordinator. The board discussed staffing, reserve funding, fundraising projections, and the rationale for the proposed investments in children's and youth services.

MOTION 26-31: Moved by R. Foster that the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board approve the 2027 budget proposal, including a municipal funding request of $988,068, and

direct that the approved budget be forwarded to the Town of Niagara-on-the-Lake for consideration as part of the 2027 municipal budget process. **CARRIED**

MOTION 26-32: Moved by B. Beausoleil that the board approve the creation of a full-time Child & Youth Services Coordinator position, replacing the existing part-time Children's Programming position, effective immediately. **CARRIED**

6. Advocacy Committee Candidate Communications Materials & Process

The board reviewed and discussed the candidate communication materials and expressed support for the content and approach. The board endorsed distribution of the materials to candidates as presented.

7. Board Legacy Initiative

L. Tait presented a proposal for the establishment of the Gerda Molson Student Awards as a legacy initiative recognizing the longstanding contributions of Gerda Molson to the library. The proposed program would provide an annual $100 book gift card to one student from each of Niagara-on-the-Lake's four elementary schools.

MOTION 26-33: Moved by S. Elliott that the Niagara-on-the-Lake Public Library Board approve the establishment of the Gerda Molson Student Awards beginning in 2027, with annual funding of up to $500 from the library donations reserve;
That the board advocacy committee be tasked with developing the award criteria, selection process, and program details in consultation with Niagara-on-the-Lake elementary schools and library staff, and with overseeing implementation of the award program;
That board members be invited to participate in the presentation of the awards at participating schools;
That the broader legacy ideas identified by the current board be documented for future consideration following confirmation of the anticipated estate funding.
CARRIED

8. Operational Updates

8.1. Staff Report

L. Tait provided an update on recent library activities and initiatives. Highlights included the success of the Drag It to Brunch fundraiser, which raised more than $6,000 for the library's diverse and inclusive collection; the completion of the Summer Reading Program; the addition of four new staff members; expanded EarlyON programming at the library; receipt of grant funding from the Niagara Community Foundation and the Niagara-on-the-Lake Rotary Club; and upcoming fall initiatives including Teen Takeover, the Dream Borrow Library of Things Contest, Culture Days programming, and Wine & Words with Dr. Brian Goldman.

8.2. Play in the Park Report

D. Krause reported on the Library's partnership with the Town's Play in the Park program, which brought a pop-up library to six parks over a 10-week period during the summer and engaged 1,183 participants. The initiative successfully combined library services with recreation programming and provided increased outreach opportunities throughout the community. A post-program review will be conducted to assess attendance patterns and identify opportunities for future improvements.

8.3. Q2 Statistics

L. Tait presented the Q2 statistical report and highlighted continued growth in library service usage, including increases in physical and digital circulation, library visits, teen engagement, and use of the St. Davids outreach service. Overall, the statistics demonstrated strong community engagement with library services.

The board requested that future statistical updates include information on active library cardholders and comparative data from other Ontario public libraries where available.

8.4. Operational Plan Progress Update

L. Tait presented an update on progress toward the 2026 Operational Plan and reported that most initiatives are either complete or progressing on schedule, with positive momentum across all three strategic pillars.

8.5. Media Coverage Report

D. Krause reported on media coverage and paid advertising efforts undertaken to promote summer library programs and events. The board discussed opportunities to further enhance community awareness of library services and expressed interest in exploring additional media and promotional opportunities in the future.

8.6. Correspondence

None

9. Business Arising

9.1. Bookmobile Presentation

E. Ing presented research on bookmobile services operated by a number of Ontario public libraries, including information on operating costs, service models, programming, and community engagement. The presentation noted that bookmobiles are used primarily to circulate library materials, with some opportunities for programming, although programming capacity is often limited by staffing resources and vehicle space constraints. The board discussed the findings and the importance of first determining the desired service outcomes and community needs before considering a specific delivery model. Alternative outreach approaches, including the use of smaller vehicles to transport materials and support programming activities, were also discussed. No decision was made at this time, and the matter will be considered further as part of broader discussions regarding future outreach and service delivery.

9.2. Finance Committee

9.2.1. 2026 Budget Update

L. Tait reported that the library remains in a strong financial position. Revenues are currently projected to exceed budget, driven primarily by higher-than-anticipated fundraising, donations, and other one-time revenue sources. Donations and fundraising revenues are performing particularly well and are expected to significantly exceed budget projections. Expenditures are tracking as expected, with no significant budget variances or overruns anticipated at this time.

9.3. Advocacy Committee

S. Elliott reported that the Advocacy Committee will focus on developing the criteria and program details for the proposed Gerda Molson Student Award, in consultation with library staff and local schools.

9.4. Governance Committee

W. Scott presented the updated Board Work Plan and Governance Compliance Dashboard. W. Scott presented the proposed board legacy document. The Board discussed the opportunity to reflect on its accomplishments, identify key achievements, and consider future opportunities and challenges facing the library. Board members agreed to hold a special dinner and discussion at D. Novak's residence on November 18, 2026, at 5:30 p.m. The evening will provide an opportunity to celebrate and show appreciation for the board's time together, while also sharing reflections and content to help inform the board's legacy document and future priorities.

L. Tait presented two updated operational policies.

MOTION 26-34: Moved by S. Elliott that the board approve Policy OP-01: Privacy, Access to Information and Electronic Messages and Policy OP-17: Public Internet & Technology Services, as presented. **CARRIED**

9.5. Board Transition Committee

D. Novak reported that the Town Clerk had advised that the Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed by the newly elected council during its first discussion regarding the appointment of library board members. The board discussed the matter and raised questions regarding compliance with the *Public Libraries Act*, particularly with respect to appointment timelines and procedures. The board agreed to continue monitoring the matter as additional information becomes available

10. Community Engagement & Inquiries

None

11. Other Business

None

12. Meeting Termination

MOTION 26-35: Moved by B. Beausoleil that the meeting be terminated at 7.31pm. **CARRIED**