

Smiths Falls Public Library Board Minutes

Date: October 22, 2024
Location: Temporary Library
Time: 6:33 p.m.
Adjournment: 7:55 p.m.

In attendance: **A. Guerin** **S. Martin**
 M. Gallagher **C. Mariona**
 C. Cummings **R. Cauley**
 J. Miller (part-time)
 A. Foster, CEO/Chief Librarian

Regrets: **M. Murphy** **S. McLean Knapp**

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Agenda / Item / Issue	Discussion / Action
1. Call to order	A. Guerin called the meeting to order at 6:33 p.m.
2. Land Acknowledgement	The partial Land Acknowledgement Statement for the Town of Smiths Falls was read by A. Guerin.
3. Approval of the Agenda	J. Miller noted the need to discuss the MOU. It was included under "Issues with the Town." S. Martin had nothing to report from Montague so it was removed from the agenda Motion: J. Miller moved the approval of the agenda as amended. Seconded by S. Martin. Carried.
4. Minutes of September 24, 2024	Motion: It was moved by C. Cummings and seconded by S. Martin that the minutes of September 24, 2024 be accepted as circulated. Carried.
5. Disclosure of Monetary Interest	None.
6. Business Arising from the Minutes	None.
7. Correspondence	None.
8. Librarian's Report and Statistics	A. Foster noted that statistics were disappointing overall in September. Even OverDrive/Libby were down; this may be because wait times have been steadily increasing so that people may be waiting for books rather than actually borrowing in many cases. Staff appeared to be

tiring of the temporary location and becoming surprisingly nostalgic about the regular library building. The PLOG application was submitted. Rideau Roundtable have hired a coordinator so we're hopeful of some progress on the eco-literacy centre project. A. Rankie was disappointed with the execution of the 80s Block Party but thought the idea had potential. Take and make kits continued to be popular. Book club attendance was so-so. Baby Time had excellent attendance; it seems like when attendance is high for Baby Time it's lower for Stories & More and vice versa. D. Kuehl met with M. Laphen from Merrickville Public Library and discussed tutoring; we're planning to change how we schedule with program. Fridays are difficult as many people leave for the weekend so we're thinking of offering kids' movies on Friday afternoons (we're purchasing a movie license for next year). While statistics were disappointing generally, we feel that only having 10% less visits compared to last year wasn't bad for the temporary location.

Motion: It was moved by A. Guerin and seconded by C. Mariona to accept the librarian's reports. Carried.

9. Mission & Vision Statements

M. Gallagher provided a list of 15 potential mission statements and 10 potential vision statements he'd created.

J. Miller felt that it made more sense to revisit the mission and vision statements as part of a broader strategic planning process.

It was agreed that it would make more sense to revisit the mission and vision statements once we've moved back to the original library, likely toward the end of this board's term. It was also felt that using a paid facilitator would be better as this person would be neutral and people would take the process seriously given the cost. A. Foster will try to obtain some costing for local strategic planning facilitators.

10. Issues with the Town

A. Foster has been unable to get any information about pay equity from the town since the early stages of the project. She noted that staff is getting increasingly frustrated as this has been unresolved for nearly a year now. A. Guerin had a meeting with M. Morris and N. Bennett months ago and has also been given no further information. J. Miller thinks that the town wants to tie pay equity to the signing of the MOU. A. Foster noted that MOU, as of the last version provided by the town, wasn't close to being ready. She will email the most recent MOU draft to the entire board. A. Foster will try to set up a meeting with S. Clark and N. Bennett prior to the next board meeting where S. Clark plans to present.

As we have no pay equity and thus no salary-related costs, our budget is stalled. Pay makes up the largest part of the budget so we really don't know where we stand. Last year, the board ended up passing the library budget excluding the pay-related lines but it might make sense to refuse to pass the budget until the board is provided with all the needed information.

A. Foster also noted that the town has started following updated employment by-laws that aren't actually written or passed yet. The library board would need to adopt these for this apply to library employees. She doesn't feel that it makes sense have something in effect that hasn't actually been passed. This sort of situation may be why the library has the issue of staff thinking they have 7 sick days while the town claims they have 6 sick days.

11. Committee Updates

Finance:

Financial reports are still slow to come. The largest operating budget report covers until August 31. Overall, the budget is on track.

C. Cummings feels he is now receiving good reports from P. Dowber regarding the renovation budget. It is in good shape at this point.

P. Dowber thinks differently about what a capital expense is than did his predecessors so items that would have previously gone in the capital budget (eg. microfilm reader) can be put into the operating budget.

Fundraising:

S. Martin noted that she went with A. Foster to accept a \$1,500 cheque from the Rotary Club of Smiths Falls. It went well and they are very interested in children's literacy (eg. they give out dictionaries to children) and we mentioned how well what they do aligns with the Friends of the Library. R. Cauley has stepped back from her role as co-chair of the committee. She hopes to have another meeting soon and perhaps another music trivia event.

Policy and Governance:

Nothing to report but hopefully soon.

Property Committee:

C. Cummings noted that nothing much happened with the renovation for a while. The priority is now to seal up the building so that it is safe from the weather. There were problems with Premium Construction. The project manager quit and they're now on the sixth site supervisor. There have also been problems with the town's building inspectors and some subcontractors. Money to the architect has been well-spent as they've saved us tens of thousands of dollars. He feels that the

new completion date of late January is likely the worst-case scenario but it may depend on the engineers and building inspectors. The project's engineer has proven that the design is safe and has even had two colleagues confirm his finding but it's still unknown if this will satisfy the third-party engineer brought in by the town's building inspectors. This is an unprecedented situation. C. Cummings also noted that the doors are complete and he'll go see them this week. He also noted that the shrubbery now looks good.

12. Municipal Report

None as J. Miller had departed.

13. New Business

It was felt that next meeting would be too late to discuss the Christmas party as it would likely take place on December 8 or 15. A. Guerin will send out an email to everyone and will consult with possible venues.

14. Date of Next Meeting

November 26 at 6:30 p.m.

15. Adjournment

A. Guerin adjourned the meeting at 7:55 pm.



A. Guerin, Chair



A. Foster, Secretary