



**Halifax Regional Library Board
Meeting Minutes
March 7, 2019
Halifax Central Library, 3rd Floor Boardroom
4:30-6:30pm**

Minutes

Present

Tara Gault (Chair)
Cindy O’Driscoll (Vice-Chair)
Marika Warren
Alfred Burgesson
Kim Brooks
Tim Outhit
LeQuita Porter
Lisa Blackburn
Brad Munro
Leah Hamilton

Staff

Åsa Kachan, Chief Librarian and CEO
Debbie LeBel, Director of Access
Kathleen Peverill, Director of Public Service
Cathy Maddigan, Director of Human Resources
Terry Gallagher, Director of Finance & Facilities
Alison Lucio, Executive Assistant & Board Coordinator

1.0 Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

Tara Gault called the meeting to order. Brad Munro put forth a motion to approve the agenda as circulated. This motion was seconded by Leah Hamilton.
Motion approved.

2.0 Minutes

Cindy O’Driscoll put forth a motion to approve the minutes of January 24, 2019 as circulated. This motion was seconded by Tim Outhit.
The minutes will be changed to clarify that Board Chair Tara Gault will recuse herself of any board discussions that would involve a privacy breach as she has recently accepted a position with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nova Scotia.
Motion approved.

3.0 Chair's Welcome

Board Chair Tara Gault welcomed everyone to the meeting, and provided a special welcome to the newest board members: Marika Warren, Alfred Burgesson, and Kim Brooks.

4.0 Business Arising

4.1 Library Funding

Åsa Kachan provided an update to the board regarding the current state of Library funding from both the municipality and province. A memo was circulated to all board members last week outlining the recent budget discussions and decisions from the municipality. This past year at Halifax council, staff were requested to base a budget on a 2.9% tax increase. The figure that the Library was originally provided was flat due to a number of fixed cost increases in leases and facility care contracts. The Library was then asked to provide a budget based on a 1.9% tax increase. The difference between the 2.9% and 1.9% translates to approximately \$350,000 in Library funding. The reduction in funding would likely result in impacts to service with a possible reduction of staff and most likely opening hours as well. Åsa Kachan reported that thankfully Council provided the \$350,000 increase in funding, offsetting the difference between 1.9% and 2.9%. Unfortunately the funding that was requested by the Library for increased food programming (\$50,000) and reduction of isolation (\$50,000) was not approved. Hopefully the Library's Fund Development Manager, Laurel Taylor, will be successful in applying to grants to provide funds for food programming.

Åsa Kachan reported that provincial funding has remained stable, but the funding formula was outdated as it has not changed in a number of years. Over recent months, the province has worked on updating the funding formula and will be completing a study on the social impact of libraries, with a new funding model in place for 2020, long with a \$500,000 library innovation grant funding available to libraries. Halifax Public Libraries will apply for this grant funding. It is a positive development that all libraries throughout Nova Scotia will receive improved funding. As the province decides the funding formula, they will begin to provide appropriate notice to the municipalities.

Åsa Kachan and Terry Gallagher provided a brief update on the capital budget, reporting that \$500,000 has been allocated for Keshen Goodman improvements and \$500,000 has been allocated to Halifax North. It is anticipated that these amounts will cover the cost of having detailed drawings prepared for the two projects.

Terry Gallagher spoke to the State of Good Repair being addressed at the Halifax North Branch. Mr. Gallagher explained how the Bedford public library is located in leased space, and therefore does not appear on the municipality's risk matrix requiring funds.

Councillor Outhit spoke to the difficulty faced by Regional Council deciding on this year's budget cycle. Councillor Outhit spoke to the positive support that the Libraries have from Council.

5.0 Chief Librarian and CEO Report

Åsa spoke to the report that was included in the package. In every board package there is an overview of some branch highlights. Highlights included:

African Heritage Month Highlights

- HPL received extra funding from TD this year for AHM. The library oversees the funding and provides support to all associated programming for AHM.
- Lift Every Voice is a highlight event
- Minister Tony Ince pointed out that it is the community celebrating the community.
- Book launch with young authors was held (with Woozles selling copies)
- Great food programming throughout the month
- Lindell Smith was a key speaker at a Library event. It was a great event and the Library appreciates Councillor Smith's ability to speak to the wonderful things that happen at the Library.
- Many great conversations happened throughout the month. Robert Wright and LGBTQ+ community provided a great talk.
- There is an online Photo album on Facebook with great comments from the public.
- Exciting to see the signaling that AHM isn't just a 'month' – and now HPL has moved to connections being retained throughout the month.

Day of Learning

- The second Day of Learning for our managers and librarians was held.
- This event has managers and librarians providing presentations on topics from recent conferences that they have attended.
- It was a great event, and staff appreciate the opportunity to learn from one another.
- A third Day of Learning will be scheduled for early summer.

Tara Gault spoke to the Board regarding Educational sessions that have been provided as part of the Board meetings. Previously presentations from staff regarding Library Fund Development, the Creative Lab (Lou's Studio) and Teen Programming have been given to the board. Board members were encouraged to provide suggestions regarding any Education Sessions they would like to see provided at future meetings.

Åsa Kachan spoke to the possibility of having a presentation on Intellectual Freedom at an upcoming meeting of the Board. Libraries are facing increased challenges and it is recommended that the Board have a future conversation on this subject.

6.0 Board Committee Reports (Standing Items)

6.1 Board Executive Committee

Tara Gault provided an update to the Board regarding the Board Executive Committee. Ms. Gault reported that as Lorraine Glendenning (former Chair of the Board Planning & Performance Committee) and Stephanie Clark (former Chair of the Board Finance and Audit Committee) are no longer members of the board, the Committee did not hold a meeting this past month. Ms. Gault informed the Committee that she met with Åsa Kachan and Alison Lucio to set the agenda for the board meeting.

With the position of Vice-Chair having been made vacant with the departure of Lorraine Glendenning, Leah Hamilton put forth the following motion:

“THAT as the position of Vice-Chair has become vacant, I move that the Halifax Regional Library Board vote to make an interim appointment of a Vice-Chair. The term of this interim appointment shall expire at the Annual Meeting.”

This motion was seconded by Brad Munro.

Motion approved.

Lisa Blackburn put forth the following motion:

“THAT nominations be opened for the position of Vice-Chair under the terms of the preceding motion.”

This motion was seconded by LeQuita Porter.

Motion approved.

Leah Hamilton nominated Cindy O’Driscoll for the position of Vice-Chair. This nomination was seconded by Lisa Blackburn.

Motion approved.

Cindy O’Driscoll accepted the nomination, and there were no further nominations.

Tara Gault, Chair of the Board, declared Cindy O’Driscoll as Vice Chair of the Board. Ms. O’Driscoll also accepted the position of Chair of the Planning and Performance Committee.

Executive Appointments

Kim Brooks put forth the following motion:

“THAT Leah Hamilton assume the position as Chair of the Finance & Audit Committee until after the Annual Meeting.”

This motion was seconded by Tim Outhit.

Motion approved.

Board Awards Working Group

Tara Gault provided a brief overview of the work of the Board Awards Working Group. This group has typically been comprised of staff and board members. Lisa Blackburn Chaired this group last year. Brad Munro put forth the following motion:

“THAT Lisa Blackburn Chair the Boards Awards Working Group for the 2019 Board Awards.”

This motion was seconded by Cindy O’Driscoll.

Motion approved.

6.2 Finance & Audit Committee

Leah Hamilton provided an update to the Board regarding the recent meeting of the Finance & Audit Committee. Ms. Hamilton spoke to the financials that were included in the board package. Ms. Hamilton stated that the excellent financial position of the organization as it nears year-end is a credit to the organization in the work done by management. Åsa Kachan provided further details explaining backgrounds of further line items.

Board member Kim Brooks left the meeting at this time.

6.3 LBANS Update

Tara Gault provided an overview on the LBANS organization and its operations. Many of the concerns brought forward by LBANS can be very different from ours as LBANS is comprised of mostly all rural libraries that receive the bulk of their funding from their municipalities and face different challenges than those that HPL faces. With the departure of Janet Newton from the Board, Tara Gault will step into the role of the LBANS rep for the time being.

7.0 Motion to Move In-Camera

Cindy O’Driscoll put forth a motion for the Board meeting to move into an in-camera session to discuss the following agenda items:

- 7.1 Strategic Workforce Plan
- 7.2 NSUPE 14 Collective Agreement Negotiations
- 7.3 Eastern Shore Lifestyles Centre

This motion was seconded by Tim Outhit.

Motion approved.

Cindy O’Driscoll put forth a motion for the Board meeting move out of the in-camera session.

This motion was seconded by Brad Munro.

Motion approved.

8.0 New Business

No further business was brought forward for discussion.

9.0 Adjournment

Tara Gault adjourned the meeting.