



Halifax Regional Library Board

Meeting Minutes

Videoconference – via Zoom

Thursday, May 28, 2020 – 4:30-6:00pm

1.0 Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

Board Chair Cindy O’Driscoll called the meeting to order.

Lisa Blackburn put forth a motion to approve the agenda.

Cindy O’Driscoll requested that the following agenda item be added as part of the in-camera portion of the meeting:

6.3 Lease Discussion

Linda MacKay seconded the motion to approve the agenda with the agenda.

Motion approved.

2.0 Minutes of April 16, 2020

Marika Warren put forth a motion to approve the minutes as circulated. This motion was seconded by Lisa Blackburn.

Motion approved.

3.0 Chair’s Report

Cindy O’Driscoll provided an update to the Board regarding the Executive Committee. The Committee did not meet during the past month, but held an email discussion regarding the CEO Evaluation and CEO Succession Plan. These two items will be discussed in more detail at the June Board meeting.

Work on the Annual Report continues, and Colleen Fraser joined the meeting later to present the theme and general direction of the Annual Report.

Cindy O’Driscoll shared with the Board that today the Board received notice that the two provincial appointees to the Board have been approved; letters will be received by the Board Chair and CEO with further details.

4.0 Business Arising

4.1 Covid-19 Update and Reopening Plan

Chief Librarian and CEO Åsa Kachan provided an update to the Board regarding the re-opening plan of the library spaces. Ms. Kachan reported that the organization has been sharing information with staff and the public, and there is a sense that the province and Nova Scotia businesses may be heading toward the ‘next phase’ of soft re-openings. A detailed report was included in the meeting package. Highlights included:

- curb-side pickup is being piloted at Sheet Harbour and Woodlawn. This pilot will serve to assess logistics before rolling out this service to other branches.
- The organization is looking at a multi-staged approach to re-opening. (staff only, staff with limited public, staff with increased public with materials going in and out, staff with regular integration with the public).
- CULC Think Tank work is nearing completion. Åsa Kachan reported that this was an amazing effort of a number of professions from 22 different libraries who worked together to prepare a re-opening framework that could be used nationally by all libraries as they look to re-open public spaces. The report has been made public and a number of webinars have been scheduled to present and speak to the material.
- A number of portable washrooms have been installed on the back plaza of Central Library. As we head towards warmer weather, the Library will look to establishing locations as cooling centres as well as outdoor programming.
- The organization is exploring the expansion of technology lending as there is not equity in access.
- The Learning and Development work done to date by staff was included in the package for reference. In addition to balancing life and work, staff have leaned into training and L&D and took working from home as an opportunity to dedicate time to training.
- Snack packs are being prepared and provided from branches.
- Number of WiFi connections during branch closures is very notable. It is clear that people are still coming by the thousands to pick up the WiFi signal. Signals at branches have been boosted.
- The Steering Committee and Re-opening team will continue this work as re-opening is complex and must be well managed.

Lisa Blackburn shared that from a Council perspective, the Library's response has been noted by Council as being incredibly strong and positive. Lisa Blackburn thanked the Library on behalf of Council for its continued dedication to serving the public.

4.2 Operating & Capital Budget

Management provided an overview of the operating budget. This budget was recast and the reduction in revenue has been taken into account as is reflected in the budget included. The Board was reminded that this budget has not been approved and is currently on Council's agenda for the June 9 meeting.

The \$250,000 of Capital funds allocated for the Bedford Library design has been pushed out as land has not been secured for this project.

The proposed furlough agreement was approved by the Union membership last night. Furloughed staff will be well supported through CERB. Cathy Maddigan has done a very successful job of working with the Union to come to a positive outcome.

The draft year-end financials have been prepared. Auditors are scheduled to be on-site during the beginning of June. The pre-audit year-end deficit was calculated to be (\$925), which is absolutely fantastic. The Board thanked Åsa Kachan and the organization, especially the Finance Department, with such dedication to end the fiscal year on budget. *(Updated year-end financials will be included with the minutes.)*

4.3 SWP Update

Mairead Barry, Senior Manager of Strategy, provided an update on the Strategic Workforce Plan to the Board.

The project is a culmination of three big components of work; from the staffing model perspective there will need to be some necessary re-work due to the changing nature of service related to covid-19.

The Transition planning continues with the joint union and non-union work team. The next step will be the negotiation of the transition of employees. A proposal has been brought to the Union and the team incorporated feedback. The team is now finalizing the details for the plan before returning to the Union for decision.

Sara Gillis is leading the Staffing Excellence team. This team has been working diligently to develop a variety of different learning tools. This is an opportunity to re-think the organization's training materials and how staff will transition into new roles.

4.4 Sheet Harbour Update -Eastern Shore Lifestyles Centre

Åsa Kachan informed the Board that this project has moved to Council for approval. On March 5, 2019 a request for a staff report was made; this report was included in the package for information. Council approved the project and identified next steps, including a provision for some funding. This is not an insignificant project.

Terry Gallagher spoke to some improvements that will be made to the existing Sheet Harbour branch; including washroom and entrance improvements. This will address accessibility concerns for the location and will be able to covid-19 friendly.

4.5 Annual Report

Colleen Fraser of the Marketing & Communications team provided a presentation on the theme and look of the 2020 Annual Report. In advance of the presentation, Board Chair Cindy O'Driscoll thanked Colleen and the Marketing & Communication team for their exceptional work with the Library's social media during the pandemic. Community

engagement has been exceptionally good, and comments regarding the social media presence have been incredibly positive. The Board was pleased with the work done to date and commended the theme and areas that will be explored throughout the Annual report.

5.1 Board Planning & Performance Committee

(no update as Committee did not meet)

5.2 Finance & Audit Committee

Committee Chair Marika Warren reported that there was nothing further to add as the financials were discussed earlier in the meeting. The written update was provided in the meeting package.

5.3 LBANS Update

Board Chair Cindy O’Driscoll reported that there was nothing to report. It is hoped that the Board Chair will be able to meet with LBANS Board Chair to discuss next steps.

6.0 Motion to move in-camera

Marika Warren put forth a motion to move in-camera for the purposes to discuss:

- 6.1 Staffing Update
- 6.2 CEO Succession Plan
- 6.3 Community Office

This motion was seconded by Lisa Blackburn.

Motion approved.

7.0 Adjournment

Cindy O’Driscoll called for a motion to adjourn.

Meeting adjourned.