



**Halifax Regional Library Board
Meeting Minutes
Zoom (Videoconference)
June 22, 2023**

Present

Kim Brooks
Marika Warren
Kathryn Morse
Chi Harris
Ayo Aladejebi
Christian Browne

Regrets

Erin Wynn
Tony Mancini

Staff Present

Åsa Kachan
Mairead Barry
Megan Gainer
Dave MacNeil
Alison Lucio
Cathy Maddigan

1.0 Call to Order

Board Chair Kim Brooks called the meeting to order.

Approval of Agenda

Kim Brooks put forward a motion to approve the agenda as circulated. This motion was seconded by Kathryn Morse.

Motion approved.

Approval of Minutes

Kim Brooks put forward a motion to approve minutes of April 20, 2023. Marika Warren seconded this motion.

Motion approved.

2.0 Chair's Report

Board Chair Kim Brooks welcomed everyone to the meeting. Kim Brooks shared that the Board has not received notice from the province regarding the two vacant provincial appointments. In addition, the Board Chair informed the Board that the CEO Evaluation was concluding and that the Chair and Vice Chair will meet with the CEO to discuss the results.

3.0 CEO's Report

Chief Librarian & CEO Åsa Kachan provided an update to the Board. Highlights included:

- Åsa Kachan reported that the renovations at Keshen Goodman continue and HRM Council has approved additional funding to the project. Thank you to Council, and Councillors Morse and Mancini for their support of this additional funding.
- Megan Gainer, Director of Facilities, shared an update of the renovation timeline. There have been some changes to the project supervisor which has resulted in some shifts.
- The Strategic Plan work is underway with a staff consultation survey and public survey currently open. Even by taking a quick look at the results already received, it is clear that we are living in an increasingly polarized world. The community is facing a number of competing issues and priorities. Work will continue on the development of the Plan with continued Board input and small group consultations with community partners to come through the early fall. The Board agreed that a fall retreat would be a good opportunity to review the work to date and provide input.
- Åsa Kachan spoke to the provincial funding model for public libraries in Nova Scotia. Currently, the CORL membership is preparing an RFQ to have a report prepared that will support some background research to help inform an updated funding model. This report will build the case for adequately funding public libraries across the province. The province is in growth mode, and we know that public libraries provide a broad array of services and are an essential point of connection for newcomers.

Marika Warren put forth the following motion for consideration:

THAT the Halifax Regional Library Board endorse the direction CORL is taking on approaching a different view and associated funding model for NS public libraries.

This motion was seconded by Kathryn Morse.

Motion approved.

- Åsa Kachan provided an update on library issues across the country and North America. Intellectual Freedom continues to be an area of great discussion. New Brunswick public libraries were inundated with complaints and challenges, librarians in the US are having members of the public protesting their library locations.

- With the recent wildfires in the Tantallon area, the local team at the Tantallon library provide tremendous services to those impacted. There was thankfully no damage to the branch.

4.0 Board Committee Reports

4.1 Board Executive Committee

The Library Board Executive Committee did not meet.

4.2 Finance, Audit & Risk Committee

The Committee met on June 26 to review the draft financials for the fiscal year. The Committee reported that revenue was slightly higher than anticipated. KPMG is conducting the audit for the Library and will report to the Committee and Board at a future date.

4.3 Planning & Performance

Marika Warren provided an update to the Board. The Committee met earlier in the week, and was pleased that Dave MacNeil & Erin Morice from the Collections Department, and Alison Lucio provided an informative presentation on Intellectual Freedom and related policies. Management is working on a refresh of the Intellectual Freedom statement. The Committee stressed the importance of utilizing plain language and clarity in the Statement.

4.4 Board Awards Committee

Board Committee Chair Erin Wynn provided an update to the Board. The Committee would like to incorporate a child/youth award in the form of a Bookmark Contest.

Kim Brooks put forward the following motion:

THAT the Halifax Regional Library Board incorporate a Bookmark Design Award as part of the annual Board Awards as outlined. This award is to recognize the importance of the public library to children & youth aged up to 13 years.

This motion was seconded by Chi Harris.

Motion approved.

5.0 In Camera

At this time, Kim Brooks put forward a motion to move to an in-camera session for the purposes of discussing:

- Branch service
- Staffing update
- Risk Summary

This motion was seconded by Marika Warren.

Motion approved.