



**Halifax Regional Library
Board Meeting Minutes
December 12, 2025
Halifax Central Library, 3rd Floor Boardroom
4:00-6:00pm**

Present:

Ayo Aladejebi
Sue Murtagh
Mary-Ann Rowleston
Laura White
Killian McParland
Christian Browne (online)

Staff

Åsa Kachan
Mairead Barry
Dave MacNeil
Ken Williment
Kaya Fraser
Alison Lucio

1.0 Call to Order & Approval of Agenda & Minutes

Laura White put forward a motion to approve the agenda as circulated. This motion was seconded by Sue Murtagh.

Motion approved.

Mary-Ann Rowleston put forward a motion to approve the minutes of November 2025 as circulated. This motion was seconded by Killian McParland.

Motion approved.

2.0 Chair's Report

Board Chair Ayo Aladejebi shared board members' condolences to Laura Godsoe on the recent passing of her mother, Dale Godsoe. On behalf of the Board, Ayo expressed sympathy and shared that flowers and a card were sent.

Board Chair Ayo Aladejebi noted that it was nice to see both Board members and staff, and reflected that this was the final Board meeting of the year. He commented on the arrival of winter weather and acknowledged the very busy year experienced by both the Board and Library staff and thanked everyone for their efforts.

Ayo reflected on the recently approved Strategic Plan and the Library's role as a place committed to thriving neighbourhoods, free exploration, literacy leadership, and a strong foundation for the future. He shared enthusiasm for the work ahead and expressed excitement for the next five years.

3.0 Board Committee Reports

3.1 Board Executive Committee

The Board Executive did not meet between meetings.

3.2 Finance, Audit & Risk Committee

Committee Chair Mary-Ann Rowlston provided an update to the Board. The Finance, Audit & Risk Committee reported that there were no significant changes since the previous report. Items off budget continue to relate primarily to the timing of expenditures. The Committee acknowledged the compensation overage as expected.

There were no questions from the Board.

3.3 Planning & Performance Committee

Committee Chair Sue Murtagh provided an update to the Board on the recent review of the proposed Programming Policy.

Program Policy

Sue referenced the briefing note included in the meeting package, and thanked Director of Program Design Kaya Fraser, Senior Service Manager Kathleen Morris, and CEO & Chief Librarian Åsa Kachan for the clear and succinct overview.

Åsa Kachan shared that the review of the Program Policy identified the need for a policy that addresses concerns and escalation processes related to programming that mirrored the recently reviewed Collection Policy. This gap was identified as a risk, and the policy refresh provided an opportunity to review programming with a fresh lens. Åsa noted that this work also benefited from conversations with other library systems. There will be an associated communications roll out, and as the Board will remember, the Review Process and associated Review Framework approved with the Collections Development Policy will apply to this policy as well. Sue Murtagh added that the Committee emphasized the importance of ensuring the policy was clear, concise, and accessible to its intended audience.

Sue Murtagh put forward the following motion:

THAT the Halifax Regional Library Board approve the updated Program Policy as presented.

This motion was seconded by Killian McParland.

Motion approved.

4.0 CEO Update

Åsa Kachan provided a verbal update to the Library Board. Highlights included:

- Acknowledgement of Dale Godsoe and her story and her connection to the Library.
- A welcome to Ken Williment, who attended his first meeting as part of the Senior Excellence Team (SET), in his new role as Manager of the Eastern District.
- A lending kiosk will be launched in the East Dartmouth Community Centre; thanks to Councillor Mancini for his suggestions.
- The Board Dates were put forward for review and acceptance.

2026 Board Dates

Ayo Aladejebi put forward a motion to approve the meeting dates of the Halifax Regional Library Board for 2026. This motion was seconded by Mary-Ann Rowllston.

Motion approved.

Annual Meeting

Welcome & Call to Order

The Annual Meeting of the Halifax Regional Library Board was called to order by Board Chair Ayo Aladejebi.

The Chair confirmed that quorum was present, and noted that the purpose of the Annual Meeting was to report on the 2024–25 activities of Halifax Public Libraries. A land acknowledgement was provided.

Board Chair Message

Board Chair Ayo Aladejebi provided his personal remarks reflecting on the past year. He shared that the theme of the 2024–25 Annual Report, *“Road Tripping – A Journey Over the Past Year,”* captures the Library’s progress, momentum, and shared journey over the year. Ayo commended the talented Marketing & Communications Team for producing a visually striking and engaging Annual Report and thanked them for their work.

The Chair highlighted that printed copies of the Annual Report were available and that the report would also be shared online. He noted that the Annual Report would be shared with library counterparts across North America and Europe, showcasing the innovative and impactful work of Halifax Public Libraries.

Ayo shared that it had been a pleasure serving as Chair of the Library Board over the past year and expressed his sincere thanks to Board members Sue Murtagh, Mary-Ann Rowllston, Killian McParland, Laura Godsoe, Councillors Laura White and Tony Mancini, Christian Browne, and Jan Jensen, acknowledging their generous volunteer service and commitment to the Library.

Chief Librarian & CEO Message – Financial Reporting

Chief Librarian & CEO Åsa Kachan thanked the Board Chair and Board members for their leadership, support, and collaboration throughout the year.

Åsa reflected on the past year and highlighted activities across Library branches, including the re-opening of the Keshen Goodman Public Library, the successful Community Eats grant, and continued investment in beautiful, welcoming library spaces through artwork and design.

Åsa shared highlights from the “By the Numbers” section of the Annual Report, noting strong community use and engagement, including:

- 2,824,502 visits to Library locations
- 5,677,196 Wi-Fi connections
- 2,597,147 physical items circulated and 2,195,964 digital items circulated
- 932 preschool early literacy events, with plans to increase both the number and impact of these programs as literacy remains a key area of focus

Åsa thanked Board member Mary-Ann Rowston for her service as Chair of the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and noted that the Audited Financial Statements were included in the Annual Report for public reporting. Åsa confirmed that the Audited Financial Statements were approved by the Board on October 30, 2025.

A video highlighting the work of Halifax Public Libraries over the past year was shown. This video will be promoted on the Library’s website and through social media.

Board Executive Election

The Chair advised that the Board would now move into the election portion of the Annual Meeting, noting that Sue Murtagh had requested not to stand for the Vice-Chair position for the coming year, but will be continuing in her role as Chair of the Planning & Performance Committee. Ayo Aladejebi thanked Sue for her impactful service as Vice-Chair and acknowledged the contributions of staff in supporting the Board.

The Chair called for a motion to open nominations for the position of Vice-Chair.

Sue Murtagh nominated Mary-Ann Rowston for the position of Vice-Chair of the Halifax Regional Library Board for the 2026–2027 term. The nomination was seconded by Laura White.

Mary-Ann Rowston accepted the nomination.

The Chair called for further nominations for the position of Vice-Chair three times. Hearing none, the Chair declared nominations closed.

Mary-Ann Rowston was acclaimed as Vice-Chair of the Halifax Regional Library Board for the 2026–2027 term, and the Board congratulated Mary-Ann.

5.0 In Camera Session

Sue Murtagh put forward a motion to move to an incamera session to discuss the following agenda items:

- Business Plan Review
- Board Awards Recommendation

This motion was seconded by Mary-Ann Rowleston.

Motion approved.

6.0 Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned.