Public Library | Colchester-East Hants

Colchester-East Hants Public Library Board
Meeting Minutes
2nd Regular Meeting of 2025-26
June 24, 2025

The 2nd Regular Meeting of 2025-26 was held in-person at the Truro Library and via Zoom Teleconference on Tuesday, June 24, 2025, with the following members present:

Councillor Norval Mitchell
Deputy Warden Michael Perry
Councillor Alison Graham
Councillor Dave LeBlanc
Ms. Melissa Feaver
Mr. Nathan Little
Jeff Mercer

Regrets were received from Councillors Pam Osborne, Mike Cooper, Charlene Fletcher, and Ms. Donna MacGillivray

Also attending were: Bill Morgan, Director of Collections and Technology; Jenn Atkinson, Director of Youth Services; Lesley Brann, Director of Adult Services; Kathy Little, Finance Administrator; Tracy Spence, Human Resources Administrator.

1) Call to order
   Meeting called to order 8:31 pm

2) Quorum

3) Land Acknowledgement and People Recognition Statement
   Deputy Warden Michael Perry read the Land Acknowledgement and People Recognition Statement.

4) Welcome and regrets
   Regrets: Councillors Pam Osborne, Mike Cooper, Charlene Fletcher, and Ms. Donna MacGillivray.

5) Agenda.

a. Amendments to agenda
    i. Item 7.b (Summary of insurance at other libraries) deferred to September 23 board meeting.
    ii. Item 10 not required, as the year-end Treasurer's Report and the auditor's report were both presented at the preceding AGM.
    iii. Items 11.a (LBANS) and 11.g (Truro Branch Managers positions) both deferred to the September 23 meeting.
    iv. Item 11.e (Projections re: CEHPL and funding levels remainding status quo) was circulated via email, but any questions can be addressed at the September 23 meeting).

Melissa Feaver moved to adopt the agenda as amended, and Councillor Mitchell seconded. Motion carried.

6) Minutes of the 1st Regular Meeting held on April 22, 2025
    a. Councillor Graham requested to have remarks made in jest removed from the roundtable discussion.
    b. It was noted that Lesley was incorrectly referred to as the "Directory" instead of "Director."

Approval of the corrected minutes moved by Councillor Mitchell and seconded by Melissa Feaver. Motion carried.

7) Business arising from the minutes
    a. GIC and reserve funds policy.
        i. Jeff Mercer presented the revised policy based on feedback from the April 22 meeting, specifically the highlighted paragraph in section 5. .
        ii. Discussion of wording took place, with agreement that the wording accomplishes the goals of the policy.

Approval of the policy moved by Councillor Graham, seconded by Councillor Mitchell. Motion carried.

    c. Motion regarding funds for 75th anniversary gala
        iii. Jeff Mercer presented a revision of the initial motion for clarity and reporting purposes.
        iv. Councillor Graham noted that the gala is a fundraiser, but it is also intended to highlight the library and serve as a community celebration.

Approval of the revised motion regarding fund for 75th anniversary gala was moved by Councillor Mitchell and seconded by Melissa Feaver. Motion carried.

8) Correspondence

a. Pharmacy Association of NS sent a thank you card for the assistance we provided in promoting a recent initiative.
b. NS League for Equal Opportunities sent a letter acknoledging the library's participating in Access Awareness Week.

9) Executive Director's Report
    i. Jeff Mercer highlighted the recent visit by the Provincial Librarian, Lynn Somers on May 9. She was able to tour 4 of our 5 branches and see some of the great work done by CEHPL staff.
    ii. Melissa Feaver asked about the NS Book Award Ceremony and Jeff Mercerspoke about the event.
    iii. Councillor Mitchell asked about the presentations to council. Jeff Mercer said the presentations to councils went well, and that councils were receptive and concerned about funding. Jeff stated he plans to do a presentation every year to meet the councils and keep them updated on the library.

Approval of the Executive Director's report moved by Melissa Feaver, seconded by Councillor LeBlanc. Motion carried.

11) New and Unfinished Business

b. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility (EDIA)
    i. Jeff Mercer provided a summary of recent EDIA programming offered by the library, which included: virtual author visits with Ekiuwa Aire and Linda Trinh, a performance by Wontonara Drum and Dance, Sensory Storytime with Autism NS, a session on Nutrition and Menopause offered by a local dietician, and a free hot beverage program offered at the Truro Library during the cold months. Jeff Mercer also noted that he and/or other staff attended the Millbrook and Canadian Mental Health Association Health Fairs, and the unveiling of the public installation celebrating Truro's trailblazing African Nova Scotian Women Educators and esteemed organist at Reparations Park in Truro.

c. CEHPL 75th Anniversary
    i. Councillor Graham provided an update on the work done by the Events Coordinator and presented sponsorship packages.
    ii. Tickets for the Gala will be $75 or 6 for $400. There will be a total of 250 tickets and they will be primarily housed in Truro and will have an organized ticket sale committee. Councillor Graham asked that you get in touch with her if you'd like to participate. Lesley will record the number of tickets.

iii. Discussion ensued about making tickets available outside of Truro in the outlying branches (even a few at each locations. getting the tickets out into the branches (even if a few are available at each location).
iv. If people are interested, we are currently taking names. Tickets will be printed in the next couple of weeks.
v. Councillor Graham requested that the board members help solocit sponsorships, and asked for recommendations for sponsorship chair. Please circulate the sponsorship package and get the word out to people who may be interested.
vi. There was also discussion about getting the local Chambers of Commerce and Downtown Truro Partnership involved in the promotion of the Gala and sponsorship packages.
vii. Jeff Mercer to send digital version to Nathan Little.
viii. The 75th Anniversary branch events were quickly addressed. Jeff Mercer highlighted the certificates the library received by Minister Ritcey at the Truro event, and Mayor Blair at the Tatamagouche event.
ix. Dates for upcoming 75th branch events were confirmed:

Thursday, July 17 – Stewiacke – 10:00am-12:00pm
Thursday, August 7 – Elmsdale – 10:00am-12:00pm
Wednesday, September 10 – Kennetcook – 3:00-5:00pm
Wednesday, September 24 – Middle Stewiacke – 3:00-5:00pm

d. Vacation/Lieu Policy Revisions
i. Jeff Mercer reviewed the changes made to the Vacation Policy, most of which are simply changes in wording instructing staff to submit bank/borrow requests to their direct supervisor instead of the Executive Director.
ii. Nathan Little pointed out that in sections b) and c) of "Use of Vacation Leave" on page 2 of the policy, "prior approval" should be used instead of simply "approval."
iii. The board members agreed. **Approval of the revised vacation policy with the change discussed with moved by Councillor Graham, seconded by Melissa Feaver. Motion passed.**

iv. Jeff Mercer reviewed the changes made to the Lieu Time Policy. It was explained that currently staff have 2 weeks to schedule and use their holiday lieu days. To provide more flexibility, a 3-month period to use the lieu days was proposed, which will be implemented with a tracking system for managers. All lieu days will need to be used within the calendar year, with the exception of Christmas/New Year holidays, which will need to be used by the end of the fiscal year (March 31).

v. **Approval of the revised vacation policy with the change discussed with moved by Melissa Feaver, seconded by Councillor Mitchell. Motion passed.**

f. Finance Administrator position

vi. As previously communicated to the board, Kathy Little has resigned from her position as Finance Administrator, effective June 27. Jeff Mercer extended his thanks to Kathy Little for all her assistance and recongized all of her work moving the library's finances to new systems during her tenure.

vii. Jeff stated that Kathy Little and Tracy Spence and working hard to ensure Tracy can fill in while we wait for the position to be filled. Patti Miller (Adult Services Lead) also has HR experience with our organization and can provide Tracy with some assistance as needed.

viii. Jeff is speaking with other Chief Librarians from across the province this week to discuss solutions for the Finance Administrator position.

ix. Councillor Perry said we will miss Kathy and her contributions to the organization. Councillor Graham asked if there will be compensation for Tracy during this period of additional responsibility, stating that there is a precedent for a 10% pay differential in these scenarios.

x. **Councillor Graham made a motion to increase Tracy Spence's pay by 10% - as done by precedent – for the time that she serves in the role of Finance Administrator. Seconded by Melissa Feaver. Motion passed.**

xi. Kathy Little mentioned that our auditors Baker Tilly will also provide some assistance to Tracy in this period of transition.

h. Other policies for review

xii. Jeff Mercer has identified 10 policies that require review. Staff will review these policies and and make any recommendations to board as needed (some may stay the same).

xiii. All board members agreed to that plan.

12) Member Roundtable

a. Councillor Graham – Stated that the administration of the 75th sponsorships will go through Jeff.

b. Melissa Feaver – Received a promotion in May. Congratulations!

c. Councillor Mitchel – Took part in Indigenous Day on Saturday at Sipekne'katik and was very honoured to beat the drum during the parade.

d. Councillor LeBlanc – nothing to report.

e. Councillor Perry – Suggested that we look at presenting to the councils of Millbrook and Sipekne'katik, as we serve their communities.

f. Jenn Atkinson – The Truro Library was mentioned as an example of how to decolonize a library in a presentation at the Atlantic Provinces Library Association Conference.
g. Nathan Little – Wished Kathy Little all the best in her next endeavours.

13) Next Meeting
    a. September 23 at 6:30pm

14) Adjournment
    a. Moved by Councillor Perry (9:26pm)