



## Ottawa Public Library Board

### Minutes

**Meeting #:** 5  
**Date:** May 9, 2023  
**Time:** 5 pm  
**Location:** Champlain Room, 110 Laurier Avenue West, and by electronic participation

**Present:** Chair Matthew Luloff, Vice-Chair Kathy Fisher, Trustee Jessica Bradley, Trustee Mary-Rose Brown, Trustee Rawlson King, Trustee Catherine Kitts, Trustee Harvey A. Slack, Trustee Adam Smith

**Absent:** Trustee Alison Crawford

---

1. Notices and meeting information for meeting participants and the public  
Notices and meeting information are attached to the agenda and minutes, including: availability of simultaneous interpretation and accessibility accommodations; *in camera* meeting procedures; information items not subject to discussion; personal information disclaimer for correspondents and public speakers; notices regarding minutes; and remote participation details.  
Notes:
  1. Due to technical difficulties, the meeting began at 5:11 pm.
  2. Trustees Bradley, Brown, and Smith participated electronically.
2. Recognition of Anishinābe Algonquin Territory

Chair Luloff welcomed members and attendees to the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting and delivered the Indigenous land acknowledgment statement.

3. Roll Call

The Chair proceeded with roll call by voice in random order.

4. Regrets

Trustee Crawford sent her regrets.

5. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were filed.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Minutes 3 - Tuesday, 11 April 2023

6.2 Confidential Minutes 2 - Tuesday, 11 April 2023

Results: Carried

7. Communications

There were no communications.

8. Chair's Verbal Update

**Ādisōke Update**

Chair Luloff mentioned that work continues to progress well on the Ādisōke project site. The contractor completed pouring of the main floor of the facility and pouring of the second floor is going well. Photographs showed the beginning of formwork elements that support the construction of the third floor, which will be well underway this summer. Chair Luloff mentioned that Paul Hussar, the City's Program Manager for Ādisōke design and construction, hosted a Jane's Walk with 40 participants on site. Participants had a great time, and learned about the project and the construction process on the tour.

**Congratulations to Ann Archer**

Chair Luloff celebrated Ann Archer, Manager of Content Services, who was recently selected by the Ontario Public Library Association as the 2023 recipient of the Leadership in Adults Readers' Advisory Award. Ann was recognized by her peers in the library profession for her outstanding commitment to promoting a culture of reading. He said Ann has spent her more than 30-year career in public libraries promoting a culture of reading at local, national, and international levels. In addition to bringing together staff from across the library system to share

resources and expertise, Ann has also engaged and mentored staff at all levels to create booklists and blog posts, helping them develop their skills and highlight the depth and breadth of OPL's collection. He said Ann's previous monthly radio reviews on CBC were beloved by Ottawans, sparking broader conversations about great new and old books to read. Noting that Ann has always been actively involved promoting reading in the wider library profession, the Chair recognized Ann's leadership in developing and promoting the bilingual national book club, One eRead/Un livrel Canada.

### **City of Ottawa's 20th Annual AccessAbility Day 2023**

Chair Luloff mentioned that the 20th annual City of Ottawa's AccessAbility Day event will be held May 31 as part of National AccessAbility Week, during which we recognize the contributions and leadership of people with disabilities in our communities. The event will be held remotely over Zoom and registration is now open, with the event being free to all participants. Chair Luloff indicated this year's event will focus on Development in Accessibility Legislation and Policies at the Federal, Provincial, and Municipal levels, offering a timely and engaging discussion about key accessibility issues. He said that Mayor Mark Sutcliffe will provide remarks and present a proclamation marking AccessAbility Day. An email invitation will be sent to the Board to join the Mayor, City Councillors, senior leaders, City and OPL staff, partners, and residents at this event. Chair Luloff indicated he will also attend.

### **Canadian Mental Health Week**

Chair Luloff recognized that last week was Mental Health Week, an annual opportunity to have a conversation about mental health. To support mental health, the Chair noted that OPL offered programming for teens and adults about a variety of topics to provide clients with tools to support their mental health journey. Clients could ask questions and interact with the expert presenters, connect with other community members, hear how others are coping with mental health challenges, and learn more about the help available.

### **MOTION OPL 20230509/1**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive the Chair's verbal update for information.**

Results: Received

9. Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer's Report

### **Fund Development Special Recognition**

Sonia Bebbington, Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer (CEO) announced that the Unlock Potential campaign for the Ottawa Central branch at Ādisōke has received a major gift from an individual donor in the community. OPL is deeply grateful to Ms. Jane Beaumont for a gift of \$250,000 to enhance accessibility services and technology for persons with vision loss and print disabilities in the future Ottawa Central Library at Ādisōke. Noting that this is an incredible gift, Ms. Bebbington expressed appreciation that Ms. Beaumont believes in public libraries as important institutions, supporting members of the community with accessible services and technology. Ms. Bebbington mentioned that Ms. Beaumont's financial support will help ensure the Central branch at Ādisōke will be a state-of-the-art accessible facility recognized as a leader in accessible services. She thanked Ms. Beaumont for the generous gift.

### **May is Asian Heritage Month**

Ms. Bebbington reported that OPL will be celebrating Asian Heritage Month by partnering with the Asian Heritage Society of Ottawa to offer a series of film screenings. The film *Donut King* was screened on May 7 in collaboration with the United States Embassy, and *Unarchived*, a feature-length documentary about marginalized communities challenging the content of traditional archives and museums, will be screened on May 13. Ms. Bebbington noted that *Unarchived* showcases the inspiring work of community archives in British Columbia, including those of the South Asian Canadian, Chinese Canadian, Tahltan Nation, and LGBTQ2+ communities. Ms. Bebbington mentioned that OPL will also host a virtual cooking demo with local chef Joe Thottungal on the evening of May 30. Clients can watch the local chef demonstrate three dishes from his new cookbook, [My Thali](#).

### **Victoria Day Closure**

Ms. Bebbington provided a reminder that all OPL locations will be closed on May 22 to celebrate the Victoria Day public holiday. Clients can always visit [BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca](http://BiblioOttawaLibrary.ca) to access virtual Library services.

### **MOTION OPL 20230509/2**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive the Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer's report for information.**

Results: Received

#### 10. Items/Reports

##### 10.1 Creation of an Hours of Operation Ad hoc Committee

**MOTION OPL 20230509/3**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board approve the creation of an Ad hoc Committee composed of Vice-Chair Fisher and Trustees King and Slack to further review the data of the 2022 Hours of Operation Survey Results and work with staff to incorporate key findings into any potential recommendations regarding changes to hours of operation for the Board's consideration.**

Results: Carried

10.2 First Quarter 2023 Financial Status Report

File Number: OPLB-2023-0509-10.2

**MOTION OPL 20230509/4**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

1. **Receive this report for information;**
2. **Approve the closing of the accounts as per the Works in Progress (WIP) Capital Review, including the adjustments of \$13,849 to be deducted from the Library Reserves, as further described in this report; and,**
3. **Direct staff to work with the City's Financial Services Unit to forward Appendix F - 2023 Works in Progress (WIP) Capital Review to Ottawa City Council, for consideration as part of a report through the City's Finance and Corporate Services Committee.**

Results: Received and Carried

10.3 Semi-Annual Performance Measurement - July to December 2022

File Number: OPLB-2023-0509-10.3

The Board heard from the following delegation:

**John D. Reid**, resident of River Ward, congratulated OPL on serving 20 percent of OPL's population, noting that the staff report indicates that OPL served 211,020 active cardholders at the end of 2022. He expressed concern, however, in light of OPL's strategic goal to increase cardholders by 25%, that while Ottawa's population has been increasing since 2019, OPL has been losing 5,300 cardholders annually. He asked whether the gap in reaching this goal indicated that OPL is not increasing its

community. Specifically, Mr. Reid referenced the latest figures in the current report: a 19 percent loss of cardholders, which, while it aligns with international trends, he feels merits closer examination. Mr. Reid inquired whether seeking to increase active cardholders remains the best strategic goal for OPL. He said that when the Hunt Club Riverside Association (HCRA) collected signatures for the petition in 2022, they found that many people were not library users but supported the provision of library services. He suggested that an arm's length survey of population-wide satisfaction with OPL's library service, not just among cardholders, could better measure OPL's relevance. Mr. Reid also noted that Hunt Club residents feel that the lack of a convenient branch in their neighbourhood made it impracticable for residents to support OPL; he hopes that the Hours of Operation Ad hoc Committee will address this service gap. He suggested that in hours of the day when usage is low at branch locations, resources could be relocated to communities to enhance library service beyond the confines of the physical branch structure. In closing, he urged the Board to address the trend of decreasing cardholder numbers sooner rather than later.

Chair Luloff agreed that OPL cardholders decreased during the pandemic. Ms. Bebbington added, in reference to the Semi-Annual Performance report before the Board, that staff are aware of the decline in cardholders, and have confirmed a similar trend among other libraries. Noting that pandemic recovery is ongoing, and that full operating hours have not yet resumed, she also reminded the Board that OPL measures active cardholdership by a higher bar than other libraries (using a one-year definition of active, compared to other libraries two- or three-year definitions). In closing, the Chief Librarian/CEO observed that all data must be analysed using a level playing field.

Chair Luloff thanked staff for the report and their hard work.

There being no further discussion, the report was RECEIVED as presented.

#### **MOTION N° OPL 20230509/5**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this report for information.**

Results: Received

#### 10.4 Ottawa Public Library 2022 Annual Report

File Number: OPLB-2023-0509-10.4

**MOTION OPL 20230509/6**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this report for information.**

Results: Received

10.5 2022 Policy Compliance and Delegation of Authority Annual Reporting

File Number: OPLB-2023-0509-10.5

**MOTION OPL 20230509/7**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this report for information.**

Results: Received

11. In Camera Items

There were no *in camera* items.

12. Other Business

Trustees and staff shared reading recommendations. Trustee Slack shared that he is reading [The Tucci Cookbook](#). Trustee Smith is reading [Principles for Dealing With the Changing World Order](#); he commented that the author discusses the major financial and economic cycles of empires throughout history, and does an excellent job of amplifying trends that nations have in common over the centuries and linking this to the current geopolitical landscape. Trustee Brown is reading [Mercy among the children](#), a former Giller Prize winning novel. Vice-Chair Fisher has been reading the [Outlander](#) series, as well as the [Berenstain Bears](#) series. Trustee Bradley is about to start reading [Human Transit](#), recommended to her by Councillor Glen Gower. The Chair is reading [Leadership by Henry Kissinger](#). Craig Ginther, Division Manager, Service Planning, is reading [All the Things They Said We Couldn't Have: Stories of Trans Joy](#), which is focused on the hopes and joys experienced by the trans community, a community not defined by fear.

13. Adjournment

**Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 5:33 pm.**

14. Next Meeting

**Tuesday, June 13, 2023**

---

Original signed by Matthew Luloff,  
Chair

---

Sonia Bebbington, Recording  
Secretary