



## Ottawa Public Library Board

### Minutes

<b>Meeting #:</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Date:</b>	<b>November 7, 2023</b>
<b>Time:</b>	<b>5 pm</b>
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Champlain Room, 110 Laurier Avenue West, and by electronic participation</b>
<b>Present:</b>	<b>Chair Matthew Luloff, Vice-Chair Kathy Fisher, Trustee Jessica Bradley, Trustee Alison Crawford, Trustee Rawlson King, Trustee Catherine Kitts, Trustee Harvey A. Slack, Trustee Adam Smith</b>
<b>Absent:</b>	<b>Trustee Mary-Rose Brown</b>

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. The meeting began at 5:01 pm.
  2. Chair Luloff, Trustees Bradley, Crawford, and Kitts, participated electronically.
2. Recognition of Anishinābe Algonquin Territory  
 Chair Luloff welcomed member 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 Brown was absent.

## 5. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were filed.

## 6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Minutes 7 - Tuesday, 10 October 2023

Results: Carried

## 7. Communications

There were no communications.

## 8. Chair's Verbal Update

**Ottawa Reads Young Adults (YA)**

The Chair mentioned that Ottawa Read YA returned for the 12<sup>th</sup> year in November featuring author readings and discussions with Jonathon Bécotte, Pascale Lacelle, and the New York Times bestselling author Kelley Armstrong. At a hybrid event on November 3<sup>rd</sup>, Kelly Armstrong spoke about her writing journey, her latest YA novel [Someone is Always Watching](#), and her latest adult novel [Hemlock Island](#). Free copies of the author's book were given away as door prizes.

**Second Blooms at Rosemount Branch**

Chair Luloff expressed his love of the Friends of the Ottawa Public Library (FOPLA) bookstores and announced that Second Blooms, a new FOPLA bookstore, opened a few weeks ago at the Rosemount branch. Noting that Rosemount branch has not had great FOPLA reads since the branch renovations began in 2019, he added that FOPLA's used books are among the most reasonably priced in Ottawa. He thanked FOPLA for their valued partnership and generous support of OPL.

## Remembrance Day

Chair Luloff reminded trustees and members of the public that OPL branches will be closed on Saturday, November 11, and administrative offices will be closed on Monday, November 13, to honour the courage and sacrifice of those who have served and are serving this country.

## One Year Anniversary of the Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer

Chair Luloff had the pleasure of marking the one-year anniversary of Sonia Bebbington, Chief Librarian and CEO. The Chair commented that the Board and staff are very lucky to have her and have greatly benefited from her expertise and thoughtful leadership in the last year. Vice Chair Fisher, on behalf of the Board, presented Ms. Bebbington with a small gift to honour the occasion.

### MOTION OPL 20231107/1

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

Results: Received

## 9. Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer's Report

### Coming Up

Sonia Bebbington, Chief Executive Officer and CEO thanked the Chair and all Board Trustees for their kind remarks on the occasion of her anniversary. She then highlighted upcoming programming: in November, OPL is again partnering with dear friends at Library and Archives Canada and the Ottawa International Writers Festival for two sold-out events (those interested can still watch and listen online). On November 17, Adrian Harewood will host celebrated Cree artist Kent Monkman and his long-time collaborator Gisèle Gordon, in conversation about their new book [\*The Memoirs of Miss Chief Eagle Testickle: Volume 1: A True and Exact Accounting of the History of Turtle Island\*](#), a genre-defying work from one of the most important painters working today; this book will reshape readers' understanding of the land called North America. On November 28, Canadian author and actor R.H. Thomson will offer an extraordinary look at his family's history while providing a powerful examination of how we understand war and its aftermath. Ms. Bebbington added that his new book [\*By the Ghost Light\*](#) uses his family letters as a starting point to explore the tragic human cost of war.

### Awesome Authors

Noting that this next event occurs after the next OPL Board meeting, Ms. Bebbington mentioned that she was highlighting it this evening to ensure trustees

were aware well in advance: on December 9, OPL will be honouring the winners of the Awesome Authors writing contest at the North Gloucester branch. Winners, their friends and family, and contest judges will be meeting to celebrate the launch of the Pot-Pourri 2023 anthology; each winner will receive a copy of the published book containing their contribution. The Chief Librarian and CEO added that trustees are welcome to stop by; details about the event will be shared with them shortly. In closing she thanked FOPLA for their support on the publication of the Pot-Pourri anthology, and their support of OPL every day.

### **Centre 507 Pilot Project**

Ms. Bebbington announced that Main and Sunnyside branches of OPL have renewed their collaboration with Centre 507 to support vulnerable members of the community. With funding from the City, the Centre will run a pilot program at these branches for 12 weeks, consisting of an information booth at Main branch on Wednesdays and Thursdays, and at Sunnyside later on Thursdays. Centre 507 staff will also rove within the branches to introduce themselves to clients, share information about their services, assist clients, and offer referrals to other community services.

### **MOTION OPL 20231107/2**

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

Results: Received

## 10. Presentations

### 10.1 Community Development Update

Sarah Macintyre, A/Division Manager, Client Services provided a presentation (*held on file with the Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer*) that focused on an update about OPL's community development activities, as well as context of the history of community development work at OPL. The following is a summary of the information presented:

- Defined Library Community Development work and the role of the Community Development team;
- Provided an historical timeline of this work at OPL;
- Summarized recent projects and upcoming 2024 projects to help meet the needs of the community;
- Highlighted the "One Book Can Change a Life" program in partnership with local community organization Presidential Basketball; and,

- Summarized the future plans for community development work at OPL.

Trustee King commended staff for their community development work. He added that he and Councillor Plante recently attended a “One Book Can Change a Life” program in October in Lowertown, and he observed that the youth were extremely excited, not just about basketball, but about reading, learning, and participating in their community. He mentioned engaging in several conversations and encouraging the kids to be as relentless about reading, education, and investing in their community as they are on the basketball court. He noted that the participants all received a free book and that this was meaningful to them. Trustee King commented that this was an impactful program strengthened by partnerships, including with the City’s Integrated Neighbourhood Services team, and supported by an impressive social media campaign. In closing, he thanked Courtney Mellor, the Coordinator of the Community Development team, her colleagues, and Coach Manock Lual for organizing such an extraordinary program.

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

### **MOTION OPL 20231107/3**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive the presentation for information.**

Results: Received

## 11. Reports

### 11.1 2024 Draft Operating and Capital Budget Estimates and Four-Year Capital Forecast

File Number: OPLB-2023-1107.11.1

Sonia Bebbington, Chief Librarian/CEO and Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services provided a presentation regarding the 2024 Draft Operating and Capital Budget Estimates and Four-Year Capital Forecast (*held on file with the Chief Librarian/CEO*). Ms. Bebbington noted she was pleased to present the 2024 budget, which was financially prudent, responsive to current pressures, and which provides for future needs. The budget is also built within the direction provided by Ottawa City Council, and reflects the growth previously approved by the Board in a responsible and incremental fashion. Quoting a recent report, “Overdue:

The Case for Canada’s Public Libraries,” released by the Canadian Urban Institute, Ms. Bebbington reminded trustees and members of the public that “libraries are essential to Canada’s value proposition of an inclusive and prosperous country.” She added that the budget tabled this evening supports the 2023-2028 OPL Strategic Directions and Priorities as well as next steps regarding service frameworks, aligns with the 2023-2026 Term of Council priorities at the City, and addresses mandatory operating pressures that will help ensure that library services remain a vital part of the ecosystem of learning and literacy for the citizens of Ottawa.

Ms. Basile provided an overview of the draft budget details. The overall draft budget for 2024 represents a net increase of \$2.37M dollars and allocates funding to advance the Board’s priorities by providing resources required for future development, demonstrating the value of OPL, and committing to staff and public safety by investing further in security services. Additionally, staff identified efficiencies to offset increases in costs associated with licensing and maintenance. She noted if approved, the budget will bring the total City investment in the library to \$61.115M. Ms. Basile also highlighted the 2024 Operating Pressures. Ms. Bebbington highlighted the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) requests with a high-level overview of the eight permanent FTE requested to support the Central branch at Ādisōke. She noted that six of these are proposed to be used in a permanent capacity starting in 2024 to support program offerings prior to facility opening in 2026, and the remaining two positions will be used in a temporary capacity.

Ms. Basile then provided a summary of the 2024 Capital allocation by category, the four-year capital plan, and highlighted changes to user fees. She also noted that OPL’s Reserve Funds are anticipated, with this budget, to constitute approximately \$6.11M. The Chief Librarian and CEO then summarized the next steps in the 2024 Draft Budget timeline. In her closing remarks, Ms. Bebbington reminded trustees that the draft budget, as tabled, was within the Council-directed range of \$2.37M; fulfills OPL’s mandatory requirements and maintains current operations; fulfills maintenance obligations for Library assets via internal efficiencies; enhances the client experience; provides staff capacity for both current needs and future growth; and revises user fees in a manner that is equitable and in accordance with cost recovery.

Chair Luloff then opened the floor to questions from trustees, reminding the Board that only questions of clarification could be posed to staff at this time. Matthew Pritz, Program Manager, Finance and Business Services,

and Diana Adjarska-Litzanova, Account Manager, Finance and Corporate Services Unit, City of Ottawa were also available to respond to questions.

The Chair commented that he was very impressed with the financial prudence of the organization as it demonstrates to the City of Ottawa that OPL acts with fiscal responsibility while balancing the need to prepare for the future, including the opening of the Central branch at Ādisōke.

Vice-Chair Fisher thanked staff for a comprehensive presentation. She inquired regarding the strategy for the \$850K recommended to be transferred to Reserves for future human resource requirements. Ms. Bebbington indicated that staff are proposing to actively place those monies in the Library Reserve, which is a new strategy grounded in accepted accounting principles. Ms. Basile used the analogy of a personal savings account to illustrate the rationale for placing these funds in the Reserves until required in 2026.

Vice-Chair Fisher inquired whether the 2.5 per cent increase to meeting room rental rates was to align with the City of Ottawa practices and inquired regarding the impact of keeping the current rate. Ms. Basile confirmed that the increase aligns with the City of Ottawa rates and added that she would have to report back regarding the impact of retaining the current rates. Ms. Basile added that the increase would also help address inconsistencies in bookings, as some rooms co-located or linked with OPL facilities are booked through the City and not OPL directly.

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

*Note: The report was tabled at the meeting. Documentation was posted publicly upon commencement of item.*

#### **MOTION OPL 20231107/4**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

- 1. Receive and table the 2024 Draft Budget for Ottawa Public Library, and the four-year capital forecast; and,**
- 2. Direct staff to forward the 2024 Draft Budget for Ottawa Public Library to Ottawa City Council on November 8, 2023 as part of Ottawa City Council's tabling of the City of Ottawa 2024 Draft Operating and Capital budget.**

Results: Received and Tabled

## 11.2 Ādisōke – Update on Construction and Operational Planning

File Number: OPLB-2023-1107-11.2

Craig Ginther, Division Manager, Service Planning, and Tara Blasioli, Manager, Design and Construction, Buildings, Infrastructure and Water Services Department, City of Ottawa provided a presentation regarding the Ādisōke project, specifically an update regarding construction and operational planning. (*Held on file with the Chief Librarian and CEO*). Laura George Fernandes, Manager, Special Projects was also in attendance to respond to any questions. Key highlights of the presentation included:

- Construction progress and upcoming Fall/Winter 2023/2024 schedule;
- Future building milestones and anticipated dates;
- Communications (new website and branding) and engagement activities (current and future);
- Recent milestone event (“capping off” the building) and branding unveil (October 18, 2023); and,
- Operational planning (the visitor experience and service design)

Chair Luloff thanked staff for the presentation and added that the recent milestone event was a wonderful opportunity to gather with the partners and see the incredible progress that has been made on the site. He congratulated the project team and commented particularly on the branding which was unveiled.

Trustee Slack also thanked staff for the presentation and commented that he drives by the site practically every day and is particularly impressed by the design of the auditorium as construction unfolds.

Vice-Chair Fisher commented that the tagline: “Stories live here” resonated particularly with her.

### **MOTION OPL 20231107/5**

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

Results: Received



## 12. In Camera Items

There were no *in camera* items.

## 13. Information Previously Distributed

13.1 Memo - Questions Regarding the Facilities Framework Prioritization Matrix

## 14. Notices of Motions (For Consideration at Subsequent Meeting)

There were no Notices of Motion.

## 15. Inquiries

There were no Inquiries.

## 16. Other Business

The Chair, Trustees, and staff shared reading recommendations. Julie Tremblay will be reading "[\*The Bittlemores\*](#)", A Novel by Jan Arden. Alexandra Yarrow is reading "[\*Rose à l'île\*](#)" by Michel Rabagliati. Trustee Smith is reading "[\*The Emotional Lives of Teenagers\*](#)" to better understand his two teenage kids; so far, the lesson he has learned is to engage in active listening. Trustee Bradley is reading Council documents but is looking forward to reading more during the holiday season. Trustee King is reading "[\*Power Play, Professional Hockey and the Politics of Urban Development\*](#)" by Jay Scherer, a book about the financing of sports facilities. As a result of attending the Urban Libraries Council Annual Forum last month, Trustee Slack is reading "[\*Project Unlonely, Healing our Crisis of Disconnection\*](#)". Mark Gelsomino is reading "[\*This Must Be The Place\*](#)" by Jesse Rifkin, a book that examines how real estate, gentrification, community, and the highs and lows of New York City itself shaped that city's music scene. Robin Gallagher is reading "[\*Uniquely Human\*](#)", by Barry M. Prizant, a book that presents a different way of viewing autism.

## 17. Adjournment

**Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 6:28 pm.**

## 18. Next Meeting

Tuesday, 5 December 2023

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Original signed by Matthew Luloff,  
Chair

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Sonia Bebbington, Recording  
Secretary