



Ottawa Bibliothèque
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Library d'Ottawa

Ottawa Public Library Board

Minutes

Meeting #: 30
Date: March 10, 2026
Time: 5 pm
Location: Champlain Room, 110 Laurier Avenue West, and by electronic participation

Present: Chair Matthew Luloff, Jessica Bradley, Mary-Rose Brown, Alison Crawford, Rawlson King, Catherine Kitts, Harvey A. Slack, Adam Smith

Absent: Vice-Chair Kathy Fisher

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.

This draft Minutes document contains a summary of the disposition of items and actions taken at the meeting. This document does not include all of the text that will be included in the final Minutes, such as the record of written and oral submissions. Recorded votes and dissents contained in this draft Minutes document are draft until the Minutes of the meeting are confirmed by the Board. The final draft Minutes will be published with the agenda for the next regular Board meeting and, once confirmed, will replace this document.

Notes:

1. The meeting began at 5:02 pm.

2. Jessica Bradley, Mary-Rose Brown, and Adam Smith participated electronically.
3. Mary-Rose Brown arrived at 5:28 pm.

MOTION TO ELECT A VICE-CHAIR *PRO TEM*

MOTION OPL 20260310/1

Moved by Rawlson King:

WHEREAS Vice-Chair Kathy Fisher has advised the Board of her absence for the March meeting, a Vice-Chair is required to be appointed in the interim;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Ottawa Public Library Board appoint Harvey A. Slack as Vice-Chair pro tem for this meeting.

Result: Carried

2. Recognition of the Territory of the Anishinabe Algonquin Nation

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

Vice-Chair Kathy Fisher sent her regrets.

5. Declarations of Interest

No Declarations of Interest were filed.

6. Confirmation of Minutes

6.1 Minutes 29 - Tuesday, 10 February 2026

6.2 Confidential Minutes 14 - Tuesday, 10 February 2026

7. Communications

8. Chair's Verbal Update

Ādisōke Update

Chair Luloff highlighted recent construction progress on the Central branch at Ādisōke, including exterior landscaping work, wood cladding, feature staircases,

custom millwork, as well as framing, tiling, light fixtures, and painting. He encouraged everyone to follow the project online.

Branding Launch - Billboards and Transit Signage

Chair Luloff announced that a transit ad campaign to promote OPL's new brand will occur in April and May. The campaign will introduce the new brand, increase the visibility of OPL, and build public awareness of OPL in Ottawa's busiest areas.

Riverside South Public Engagement

Chair Luloff noted that an architect has been engaged and is actively working on the building design and floorplan layout for the Riverside South facility, and OPL and the City of Ottawa will host a public information session about the project on March 24, with an online survey to follow.

March Break Programming

Chair Luloff highlighted OPL's activities for March Break with the theme of "Curious Creatures." He further noted teen programming during March Break, including hands-on activities to build practical life skills while having fun. Chair Luloff encouraged clients to browse the full list of programs online.

MOTION OPL 20260310/2

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

Results: Received

9. Chief Executive Officer / Chief Librarian (CEO/CL)'s Report

Mars est le mois de la francophonie

Sonia Bebbington, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Chief Librarian outlined key programming for Francophonie Month and the *Journée internationale de la Francophonie* on March 20, including film screenings at library branches. She invited everyone to visit the OPL website for more information.

Romance Author Panel

Ms. Bebbington shared details for the March 26 "Behind the Happily Ever Afters" romance author panel at Bayview Yards which will bring together passionate readers, support a culture of literacy, and strengthen connections with Canadian authors.

One eRead Canada 2026

Ms. Bebbington announced the 2026 One eRead Canada selection is [“Ce que je said de toi / What I know about you”](#), by Éric Chacour, with virtual author talks on April 29 and 30. To learn more about One eRead Canada, visit the OPL website.

Sunnyside Anniversary

Ms. Bebbington announced that Sunnyside branch will celebrate its 75th anniversary on March 28, with official remarks and refreshments at 2:00 pm, as well as activities throughout the day including a magic show, face painting, button making, and a visit from Zoo Crew animals. Registration is required for the activities; please visit the website.

Upcoming Closures

Ms. Bebbington noted that all OPL locations will be closed April 3 and April 6 to observe Good Friday and Easter, and that the 10 branches with Sunday hours, as well as InfoService, will be open on Sunday, April 5. Online resources are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year.

MOTION OPL 20260310/3

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

Results: Received

10. Presentations

10.1 Community Development Priority Neighbourhood Project

Sonia Bebbington, CEO/CL, introduced Sarah Macintyre, Division Manager, Client Services, and Robin Gallagher, Program Manager, Client Experience and Community Development who delivered a presentation (*held on file with the Chief Executive Officer/ Chief Librarian*) updating the Board on the Community Development Priority Neighbourhood Project in the St-Laurent branch service area in 2025. The following is a summary of the information presented:

- Community Development at OPL;
- St-Laurent Priority Neighbourhood Project and objectives;
- Results on objectives - quantitative and qualitative; and,
- Next steps.

Chair Luloff said that while the community development approach, and the pilot, initially felt nebulous to him, the presentation clarified how this is an excellent, community-building initiative. He praised the detailed report and the clear explanation of the work and expressed how pleased he was with the results, adding that the right leadership was in place to support this work.

Rawlson King commended staff for their strong work over the past 10 months, noting he has been impressed by the pilot's development and its positive impact in the community. He highlighted the value of seeing the community development librarian actively engaging with local residents and emphasized that library branches in high-priority neighbourhoods provide essential social infrastructure. He noted that community-embedded models for library service, which he learned more about at a past American Library Association conference, are proven to improve early literacy, digital inclusion, newcomer integration, and service use. He cited the significant increases in bookmobile usage in his ward and praised the librarian's responsive programming at the St-Laurent community centre. He concluded by asking about the range of partners supporting the pilot. Ms. Gallagher responded by outlining key partnerships, including with Ottawa Public Health (OPH), the City's Recreation, Cultural and Facility Services Department, the Integrated Neighbourhood Services Team, and the Inter-Departmental Task Force (the latter two both within Community and Social Services Department at the City) to coordinate support.

Rawlson King underscored the importance of coordination among partners to avoid working in silos and to create more effective solutions and noted the visible presence of OPL at local events like Overbrook Day and community association meetings as well as ongoing connection and engagement with the community.

Rawlson King asked about engagement with Indigenous urban residents, noting the importance of including First Nations and especially Inuit community members in equity-informed service delivery. Ms. Gallagher explained that Indigenous engagement is guided by the Indigenous Services team at OPL and follows a rights-based, community-led approach. Rawlson King validated the need to work at the community's chosen pace, remarked that it is important for Ottawa's Indigenous community to be at the table, and thanked staff for their efforts, stating that

the pilot reflects OPL's core mission by delivering trusted, accessible services where they are most needed.

Alison Crawford asked whether more detailed information was available about residents' information needs from OPH and collaborations with OPL, as mentioned in the presentation, and further inquired what data the team plans to collect in the coming year. Ms. Macintyre indicated she would follow up on the public health question and further explained that next year data will continue to track quantitative measures, such as program and bookmobile attendance, card registrations, and offsite participation, while placing greater emphasis on client outcomes.

Alison Crawford inquired about collaboration with the Vanier branch team, particularly with respect to engagement with Indigenous clients and residents. Ms. Macintyre explained that the pilot focused on St-Laurent branch because the priority neighbourhood identified in the analysis falls within this branch service area. Noting that branches do not work in isolation, she further underscored that one of the aims of this work is to embed successful partnerships into regular operations across more communities, serving as a model for expansion.

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

MOTION OPL 20260310/4

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

Results: Received

Following the meeting, staff provided the following information with respect to the inquiry from Alison Crawford about what types of information needs were identified through OPL's collaboration with Ottawa Public Health (OPH): Residents were seeking information about client supports such as access to health services in French, support navigating the health system, mental health and well-being support, economic challenges and cost of living, programs and supports for families and youth, gap created by the absence of a Community Health Centre in the area, and access to primary care.

11. Reports

11.1 Fourth Quarter 2025 Financial Status Report

File Number: OPLB-2026-0310-11.1

MOTION OPL 20260310/5**That the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

1. **Receive this report for information;**
2. **Approve that the 2025 operating surplus in Library Services of \$2,006,463 be transferred to the Library Reserve; and,**
3. **Upon the Ottawa Public Library Board's approval of the transfer of the Library operating surplus, direct staff to work with the City's Financial Services Unit to forward the report to Ottawa City Council, for consideration as part of the Disposition of 2025 Tax and Rate Supported Operating Surplus / Deficit report through the City's Finance and Corporate Services Committee.**

Results: Received and Carried

11.2 2025 Annual Report on Ottawa Public Library-Related Fraud Claims

File Number: OPLB-2026-0310-11.2

MOTION OPL 20260310/6**That the Ottawa Public Library Board receive this report for information.**

Results: Received

11.3 2026 Ontario Library Association Super Conference – Reports from Vice-Chair Kathy Fisher and Harvey A. Slack

File Number: OPLB-2026-0310-11.3

Harvey A. Slack reported on his experience attending the Ontario Library Association conference, calling it a valuable opportunity to connect with library workers and supporters from across Ontario, other provinces, and the U.S. He noted the enthusiastic response to OPL's new logo and highlighted strong presentations by OPL staff, including Sarah Macintyre. He said he learned a great deal from the sessions and encouraged others to attend future conferences, emphasizing the value of sharing ideas with

peers. He concluded by noting that libraries are increasingly becoming the “living rooms” of their communities, a theme echoed throughout the conference.

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

MOTION OPL 20260310/7

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

Results: Received

12. In Camera Items

There were no *in camera* items.

13. Information Previously Distributed

13.1 Bill C-15 - Advocacy progress

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

There were no Notices of Motion.

15. Inquiries

There were no Inquiries.

16. Other Business

Myra Skaronski, Division Manager, Branch Services is reading “Speak”, by Laurie Halse Anderson and “The Gift of Not Belonging”, by Rami Kaminski. Alison Crawford is reading “The Coutts Diaries”, by Jim Coutts. Gale Galloway, Executive Assistant to the CEO/CL is reading “My Friends”, by Fredrik Backman. Sonia Bebbington, CEO/CL is reading “Original Prin”, by Randy Boyagoda. Harvey A. Slack is reading “Heated Rivalry”, by Rachel Reid.

17. Adjournment

Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 5:54 pm.

18. Next Meeting

Tuesday, April 14, 2026

Original signed by Matthew Luloff,
Chair

Sonia Bebbington, Recording
Secretary