

## Ottawa Public Library Board Meeting

Minutes 15

Thursday, 28 May 2020

9:03 a.m.

### Electronic Participation

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- Notes:
1. *Underlining indicates a new or amended recommendation approved by the Board.*
  2. *The Ottawa Public Library Board Members participated virtually.*

Prior to the Agenda business, Chair Luloff welcomed Members and attendees to the third Ottawa Public Library Board virtual meeting; he also explained the legislative reasons for Members' electronic participation and the provisions governing holding a Special Meeting in lieu of the 9 June meeting. Chair Luloff reminded trustees that the Agenda is limited to the one item, the OPL COVID-19 Recovery Priority 1 Plan, which requires approval. He introduced Alexandra Yarrow, Program Manager, Board and Strategic Services as the meeting Moderator. Before turning it over to Ms. Yarrow for logistical instructions, the Chair proceeded with Roll Call by voice in alphabetic order.

**Present:** Chair: Matthew Luloff  
Vice-Chair: Kathy Fisher

Trustees: Riley Brockington, Mary-Rose Brown, Allan Higdon,  
Carol Anne Meehan, Harvey A. Slack, Tim Tierney

**Absent:** Steven Begg

Trustees Brockington and Tierney advised they may need to leave early to attend the Planning Committee. As such, the Chair permitted questions to staff from them

first, followed by others in alphabetic order.

Ms. Yarrow provided logistical details to the Members, specifically related to speaking order, technology, and voting. The Moderator then turned the meeting over to the Chair.

## DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No Declarations were filed.

## REPORT

### 1. OPL COVID-19 RECOVERY PRIORITY 1 PLAN

OPLB-2020-0501-SP

Danielle, McDonald, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) provided a verbal presentation to accompany the report regarding the Library's COVID-19 recovery priority plan and the significant amount of work that has been undertaken since the Provincial announcement on May 14, 2020 allowing public libraries to provide curbside services "for pick-up or delivery". (*Held on file with the Chief Executive Officer*). Ms. McDonald reiterated that the announcement indicated that businesses and services were permitted, but not obligated, to provide services starting on May 19. The key highlights of the presentation are as follows:

- Context: Ms. McDonald described the OPL Task forces, staff collaboration with the City via Service Recovery Task Force and the library industry, and the need to align with provincial health and safety guidance documents for curbside services;
- Project Phases and Elements of the Recovery Phase: OPL has mobilized the "Response" mode, is holding fast in the "Sustain" mode, and is presenting recommendations for Priority 1 of the

“Recover” mode. The “Recover” mode has seven elements, including preparation, five re-opening priorities, and the “New normal”;

- Employee Experience: Staff provided details pertaining to return to work dates, staff orientation, and provision of required safety equipment;
- Details about the Recovery “Priority 1,” curbside services, including the criteria for selecting locations, proposed start dates and opening hours, and the processes for returns and holds pickup; and,
- Next steps: Ms. McDonald indicated that recommendations for Priorities 2-5 will be presented no later than July 14 OPL Board meeting date.

Ms. McDonald recognized the tremendous amount of work the Operations Recovery Task Force has done to develop the operational plans to ensure the health and safety of employees and customers. She said staff are eager to return to serving the community and the community is eager to have the Library gradually and safely resume services. She said staff look forward to presenting further recovery priorities.

Trustee Brockington said the plan is excellent and the contributions from the COVID-19 Ad hoc Committee were incorporated in the plan.

In response to a question from Trustee Tierney regarding when will other branches open and what criteria will be applied in the decision-making, Ms. McDonald said at this point, staff are unable to provide information about further branches as they have to monitor how the process will work at the six recommended branches first. Ms. McDonald said staff may need to adjust existing criteria in the later recovery priorities, as per a point raised by Trustee Tierney.

Chair Luloff reminded the Board members not to share tweets until the Board approved the Priority 1 plan.

Trustee Tierney left the virtual meeting at 9:25 a.m.

Trustee Brown asked how physical distancing measures will be maintained in lineups and inside the branches with the influx of customers that branches may receive. Ms. McDonald reiterated that no members of the public will be permitted inside the branches as per the provincial order at this time. Donna Clark, Division Manager, Branch Operations indicated that the plans have been developed to minimize the long queues for members of the public. She said the Library, Ottawa Public Health and Occupational Health and Safety have informed the plans in order to mitigate possible lineups. Ms. Clark mentioned they have adapted existing OPL software to pre-book appointments for holds pickups. She explained how the launch will stagger the appointment times, so as to not have everyone arrive at the same time. She also indicated that staff have extended due dates for material currently checked out by several weeks, and have staggered these dates to slow the pace of returns so customers do not feel pressured to return their materials immediately.

Vice-Chair Fisher asked what the communication plan for this new service will look like, and how staff will manage expectations, specifically regarding holds. Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services indicated there will be three components of the communication plan that will be released today: a public service announcement, a blog post with questions and answers, and social media posts - all will inform customers about the upcoming curbside service. She said over the weekend, there will be a general email to all cardholders from the CEO highlighting the modified services available for curbside. This will be followed by targeted emails to customers, based on their unique scenario and provided examples of the options the customer can choose. Ms. Basile said that within Catherine Seaman's Customer Experience Division, the InfoService department will have enhanced staffing levels as we anticipate customers will have questions after reviewing the information on the website.

Trustee Brockington left the virtual meeting at 9:29 a.m.

In response to a question from Trustee Higdon on what the financial implications of the plan will be, and whether these have exceeded the limits under the CEO's delegation of authority, Ms. McDonald said the details of

the financial implications are described in the report and the plan does not exceed the CEO's overall authority.

Trustee Meehan asked staff to clarify the two services being offered to the public and whether staff have a sense of when customers will be able to access new material if they do not have holds on the shelf, Ms. McDonald recapped the services being offered and said staff do not have a sense when the Library will be able to extend new services. She indicated that a response will be forthcoming following a meeting with the COVID-19 Ad hoc Committee.

Further to a question from Trustee Meehan regarding technology and possible delivery of materials, Ms. Clark said the initial goal is to be able to release existing holds for customers. Staff will have a better sense after early days and weeks about how the software is performing and can plan to phase in additional services, such as releasing new holds, based on software performance and the volume of holds from returns.

Trustee Meehan asked what revenue will be lost by waiving fees. Ms. Basile said that number is not readily available; however, in 2019, the Library received under \$800K in fees, which includes meeting room rentals. Ms. Basile said a general estimate would be that the Library brings in approximately \$50K a month of revenue for fees not related to meeting room rentals.

Trustee Slack commended the CEO and staff for this exciting venture. It is a great start and customers will be very eager to see this service. He said the phased in approach is a smart endeavour as things can change on a dime.

Chair Luloff stated the most important part of the plan is the employees and customers. He said the focus in the plan on how we will protect employees and staff is heartwarming. He thanked Vice-Chair Fisher and Trustee Brockington for representing the Board on the COVID-19 Ad hoc Committee. They are serving the Board well and he looks forward to further updates from their work with staff.

**MOTION OPL 20200528/1-SP**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

- 1. Receive the OPL COVID-19 Recovery Priority 1 Plan report;**
- 2. Approve opening curbside service and returns collection at the following:**
  - a. Six branch locations: Beaverbrook, Cumberland, Greenboro, Main, Nepean CentrepoinTE, and Ruth E Dickinson; and,**
  - b. Homebound Services at private residences;**
- 3. Approve the following start dates for services:**
  - a. June 8: Accepting returns; scheduling holds pickup appointments;**
  - b. June 15: Curbside service; Homebound deliveries and returns; and,**
- 4. Delegate authority to the CEO to:**
  - a. Amend opening hours for curbside service, including weekday, weeknight, and weekend hours; and,**
  - b. Make any required adjustments to the delivery of curbside services to respond to changing conditions and circumstances; and,**
- 5. Approve the continued suspension of fees during Priority 1; and,**
- 6. Direct staff to bring forward a Recovery Plan for Priorities 2-5 at a date no later than the July 14, 2020 Board meeting.**

RECEIVED and CARRIED

## **OTHER BUSINESS**

Staff recognition – Anna Basile, Division Manager, Corporate Services

Ms. McDonald recognized Ms. Basile's recent graduation for her Master of Public Administration (M.P.A.) program at Queen's University. She acknowledged Trustee Higdon's support regarding Ms. Basile's application for the M.P.A.

Chair Luloff said he supports staff accomplishments and congratulated Ms. Basile on behalf of the Board.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

### **MOTION OPL 20200528/02-SP**

**Be It Resolved that the Ottawa Public Library Board meeting be adjourned at 9:43 a.m.**

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**Chair**

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**Recording Secretary**