

MERRICKVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Board Meeting Minutes

Merrickville Public Library Board's meeting was held on February 25, 2025 at 6:30 pm on Zoom.

Present: M-W: Kait Brady, Cindi Delcorde, Amelia Wilding, Margaret Gural (Council Rep),

Montague: Olivia Enns (via Zoom)

and Mary Kate Laphen (CEO)

Regrets: Jane Coghlan,

Other:

1. Meeting called to order at 6:32 pm.

2. **Declaration of Pecuniary Interest:** None.

3. **Adoption of Agenda:** Amendments: Items added #11b) Montague Update - Budget and #11e) Information Item.

Motion to adopt the agenda as amended: Moved by Olivia; seconded by Cindi. **ADOPTED.**

4. **Approval of Minutes:**

- Jan 28/25 special meeting. Moved by Margaret; seconded by Cindi. **APPROVED**

5. **Delegations from Public:** None.

6. **Correspondence:** None.

7. **Friends of the Library Report:** The group has sponsored a new vacuum for the Library. They have a meeting planned to prepare for their upcoming fundraisers in May.

8. **Report from Council:**

- Nothing to report

9. **Librarian's Report:** see Notes below.

10. **Strategic Planning:**

- Update re: Survey. The survey has been mailed out with the Merrickville-Wolford tax bills. The link to the online survey has been included in Montague's municipal newsletter. The survey will be included in the March *Phoenix*. The link to the online survey is live, and on our website. Mary Kate will promote on social media & email for the beginning of March.
- The Board is requested to talk up the survey and encourage people to fill it in, and to have informal discussions with community members to solicit feedback.
- In April, we will address turning our responses and other community needs assessment data into a report. Cindi will spearhead this. To be discussed further next meeting.

11. **Other Business:**

a) **Facilities:**

i. **State of the Building:** Mary Kate met with the Head of Public Works and Lead Hand to give an overview of the state of the building, including what work has been done and things that need attention.

ii. **Insurance:** We received an update on the insurance coverage for the building from the municipal provider. Note: the policy does not provide cybersecurity coverage for the library.

b) **Montague Update - Budget:** We received notice that our requested budget increase from Montague was not approved by Council. Their funding to us remains the same as last year; however, their funding to Smiths Falls Library was cut by 50% for 2025.

c) **Annual Report 2024:** Reviewed the Draft report, including the 2024 financials.

Motion: to approve the Annual Report. Moved by: Olivia, seconded by: Cindi. **APPROVED.**

Mary Kate will proceed with having it printed & added to the library website and will schedule a date to present the Report to Merrickville-Wolford and Montague Councils.

d) **Projects / Partnerships Update:**

i. **Local Houses Project:** update from Cindi. This project has gone to the Historical Society and they support pursuing this project. MDHS will be setting up the steering committee in the near future, to work out details and next steps.

ii. **Rideau Eco-Literacy Centre:** this project received funding for a program director, who is currently working on programming for March Break and for the spring & summer that will be delivered in the libraries (we are one of 6 libraries involved in this project with the Rideau Roundtable).

iii. **Remedial Reading:** this project is a Lions Club initiative (they are taking the lead and providing funding). It is moving forward, and the pilot is planned to take place at the Library this July.

e) **Information Item: CBC article/Fifth Estate episode:** Discussion of recent media coverage of an

Alberta community where the library is facing censorship pressures, specifically re: LGBTQ+ materials. This is an area of concern that is receiving much attention in the library community and is being brought to the attention of library boards.

12. Questions from the Public: None.

14. Next meeting: Tues, March 25, 2025 at 6:30 pm at the Library.

15. Adjournment: Moved by: Margaret, seconded by: Amelia. Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 7:39 pm.

Librarian _____

Chairperson _____

Librarian's Report:

January	Jan 2025	Dec 2024	Jan 2024	Jan 2023	January 2022
Patrons	1016 (incl. mtgs) &139 OverDrive users:	722 (incl. mtgs) &131 OverDrive users:	1168 (incl. mtgs) +125 OverDrive users:	956 (incl. mtgs) +9 (Zoom) +107 OverDrive users:	590 + 101 OverDrive users (unique)
(Kids/Youth)	262 (77k / 185y)	183 (56k / 127y)	310 (96k / 214y)	240 (76k / 164y)	69 (22 k / 47 y)
(Progs)	149- at lib (7 A prgs, 12 J prgs) 36 – out of lib (3 prgs) Class Visits: 291 (1 CVs @ lib 15 CVs to schools)	108- at lib (5 A prgs, 6 J prgs) 61 – out of lib (3 prgs) Class Visits: 218 (0 CVs @ lib 11 CVs to schools)	216- at lib (23 prgs) 23 – out of lib (5 prgs) Class Visits: 21 (1 CV @ lib)	130- at lib (21 prgs) 13 – out of lib (2 prgs) Class Visits: 72 (4 CVs @ lib)	0 – in liby (0 prgs) 17 - Zoom programs (4 prgs) 20 – Vax QR codes
Mtg Rm users	41 – in lib (6 mtg) 0 – Zoom (0 mtg)	20 – in lib (4 mtg) 0 – Zoom (0 mtg)	32 – in lib (7 mtg)	42 – in lib (8 mtg) 9 – Zoom (1 mtg)	0 – in liby (0 mtg) 46 – Zoom (7 mtg)
Circulation	TOTAL: 2828 Lib: 1619 (A-956, J/T – 663) OverDrive: 989 (circ) Kanopy 220 (plays)	TOTAL: 2047 Lib: 1049 (A-635, J/T – 398) OverDrive: 841 (circ) Kanopy 157 (plays)	TOTAL: 3009 Lib: 1954 (A-1097, J/T – 857) OverDrive: 835 (circ) Kanopy 220 (plays)	TOTAL: 2702 Lib: 1682 (A-966, J/T – 716) OverDrive: 902 (circ) Kanopy 118 (plays)	Total: 2286 Lib: 1444 (A-943, J/T-501) OverDrive: 672 (circ) Kanopy 170 (plays)
Computer / Internet use (+wireless):	213 (101 / 103 wifi/ 9 tablet)	165 (75 / 88 wifi/ 2 tablet)	211 (87/ 109 wifi/ 15 tablet)	121 (42 /69 wif / 10 ipad)	74 33 / 41 wifi)
ILL borrowed/lent:	86 in / 95 out	9 in / 19 out	82 in / 79 out	50 in / 48 out	52 in / 44 out

Overview: January was up substantially from December, but visits and circulation were down from last January, partly because we had more adult programs then. However, ILLs were very busy after the strike, and there have been a lot of librarian visits to schools.

Placement Student: A student in the Library Tech program (Confederation College) has asked about doing her field placement here in the spring. We are discussing, but it looks promising.

Programs & Services:

Adult Programs:

Fitness for Your Aging Brain (2 groups) started a new session at the end of Jan (until end of March).

Other Adult programs in Jan & Feb: **Guided Meditation** (run by Health Centre), **Book Club**, and **Off the Shelf** (only in Feb)

Children's Programs:

StoryTime & Saturday Play Days: StoryTime attendance is continuing strong. The Saturday PlayDays continue popular overall, but it's a bit up and down.

Teen Chill & Chat: This got off to a great start in Feb and they want to do it every other week. Three teens are running it with my support.

Upcoming Programs:

March Break: I haven't had a lot of time to work on March Break this year, but we will have activities every afternoon. I am working on the publicity and finalizing the planning.

Mini Music Makers: Anya Perry (local musician/music teacher) will be doing another music program for preschoolers & primary students in March.

EarlyON baby program: Staff from the Early Years Centre will do a baby program in March. If response is good, it may turn into regular visits.

Playgroup: is running weekly again and is off to a good start, but will be on hiatus in March while the Community Centre undergoes renovations. I am making regular story visits.

Daycare: I continue to do story visits once a month to 2 of the groups.

Class Visits: Merrickville School: I am now visiting 3 primary classes every other week (including Christmas visits), and doing monthly visits to classes at Montague School. One class from Ste Marguerite has started visits to the Library.

Museum Passes: Demand has been pretty steady and is usually higher during March Break.

Internet/Computers: Computer use is fairly steady; everything is working properly. Currently all the equipment seems to be in good shape.

InterLibrary Loans: ILLs are busy! We seem to be lending a lot – I don't know if that is because of the new system or just coincidence.

Meeting Room: There have been a lot of bookings for meetings in Feb. The room is also being used by several library programs (Book Club, Brain Fitness, Chill & Chat, Meditation, etc).

Collection: The new kids books from the Scholastic sale are being added to the shelves. The order for Spr-Sum bestsellers will be going in soon (deferred because of the Annual Report & March Break planning).

Volunteers: All is good on this front The volunteers do shelving, processing new books, packaging ILLs, genealogy scanning, etc.

Facilities: Nothing to report (thank goodness ☺).

Publicity/Outreach: Publicizing the new teen program, Seed Library, and March Break as well as the survey and community partner questions.

Partnerships/Outreach: In addition to those mentioned in Item 11d), other partner programs are starting up for 2025. The Seed Library and Eco-Champions (I am on the steering committee for both) have taken a lot of time lately to get them going for 2025.

- **Snowflake Festival (Family Day):** We were open during the Snowflake Festival with children's toys and activities. This year we had very few visitors – it was very cold and windy off the river (despite the beautiful sunshine), so only a few people came down to this end of the field.
- **Seed Library:** is now open and has been significantly more active than this time last year. We are also working on the plans for Seedy Saturday (April 12).
- **Eco-Champions:** has started up again. I have updated the website, and the steering committee is working on planning, publicizing (Phoenix) and reaching out to the schools.

Professional Development, Meetings, etc: I don't have anything scheduled at the moment, but there is likely to be some things coming up in the spring.

Donations: Our very generous donor has given us a lump sum for 2025 (rather than a series of smaller donations). As per Board direction, I will contact the bank about putting this donation into a short term investment until we complete our strategic planning.

Grants, etc: We have received our 2024 reimbursement for internet and ILL postage costs. In March I will submit the data for the provincial Annual Survey (required to receive the Provincial Library Operating Grant).

Plans for the month: March Break programs!, presenting the Annual Report to Councils, completing the Annual Survey, ordering Spring/Summer bestsellers, planning etc for Seedy Saturday and publicizing other programs, following up re: the survey and partner questions, continuing with visits to classes, etc -- plus the usual library business.