

MERRICKVILLE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Board Meeting Minutes

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

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

Montague: Olivia Enns

and Mary Kate Laphen (CEO)

Regrets:

Other: Cheryl Geeson, Friends of the Library

1. Meeting called to order at 6:36 pm.

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

3. **Adoption of Agenda:** Moved by Margaret; seconded by Olivia. **ADOPTED.**

4. **Approval of Minutes:**

- Feb 25/25 meeting. Moved by Jane; seconded by Cindi. **APPROVED**

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

6. **Correspondence:** None.

7. **Friends of the Library Report:** Cheryl Geeson (President) reported that the Friends are working on their upcoming fundraisers in May (Yard Sale and Plant Sale), as well as welcoming a new secretary, updating their membership list and providing more social engagement to encourage membership. Mary Kate will send a link to Library's 2024 Annual Report to be distributed to the Friends.

8. **Report from Council:** Nothing to report, other than noting the presentation of the Library's Annual Report at the last Council meeting.

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

10. **Strategic Planning:**

- Update re: Survey. The deadline is March 28. Will do a last push for responses and ask the municipal offices to include on their websites/social media. Mary Kate will download reports once the survey is closed, and go ahead with the gift certificate draw.
- Focus Groups/Key Informant interviews: Review of suggested questions for these. Board and Mary Kate will proceed with these interviews in April (preferably before the April board meeting).
- Timeline: Review of draft timeline to complete the strategic plan.

11. **Other Business:**

a) **Updates**

i. **Annual Report 2024:** Mary Kate has presented this to both Merrickville-Wolford and Montague Councils. Both presentations went well. The report is posted on our website.

ii. **Facilities:** The new deck stain near the library entrance has not weathered the winter well. There is stain remaining from last fall. Mary Kate will discuss with Public Works.

b) **Financial:**

i. **Update re: Montague funding:** Mary Kate and Olivia reported some additional information re: Montague's reduction in funding for Smiths Falls Library, and discussed possibilities going forward. During her Annual Report presentation, Mary Kate let Montague Council know that the Board is open to discussing a better-defined funding formula.

ii. **Update: donation management (Resolution 2025-MAR-01):** Mary Kate presented information from both the RBC and the Ottawa Community Foundation re: short-term investment possibilities for a large donation received in 2025, while the Board completes the strategic plan.

Resolution 2025-MAR-01 (see file): that the donation be transferred to the Merrickville-Wolford Public Library Fund with the Ottawa Community Foundation. Moved by: Amelia, seconded by: Olivia. **APPROVED.**

c) **Projects / Partnerships Update:**

i. **Local Houses Project:** Reviewed the Project definition provided by Cindi to the Board and the Historical Society (MDHS). MDHS has endorsed the project. Next steps will be to create a steering committee, review what materials, equipment, manpower are available and what else is needed.

Motion to endorse and proceed with the project as defined in the presented document:

Moved by: Jane, seconded by: Margaret.

ii. **Rideau Eco-Literacy Centre:** upcoming workshop in April. Monthly workshops are planned for spring.

iii. **Remedial Reading:** the Lions Club has approved funding for this. Much of the planning has been done, and this continues to move forward. The pilot will take place at the Library in July

iv. **Eco-Champions Contest:** this is gearing up (deadline is May 24). Mary Kate continues to be involved with the steering committee.

12. **Questions from the Public:** None.

13. **Next meeting:** Tues, April 22, 2025 at **7:00 pm** at the Library. ***Special Time

14. **Adjournment:** Moved by: Margaret, seconded by: Jane. Meeting **ADJOURNED** at 8:06 pm.

Librarian _____

Chairperson _____

Librarian's Report:

February	Feb 2025	Jan 2025	Feb 2024	Feb 2023	Feb 2022
Patrons	1042 (incl. mtgs) &135 OverDrive users:	1016 (incl. mtgs) &139 OverDrive users:	1441 (incl. mtgs) +118 OverDrive users:	915 (incl. mtgs) [includes 206 from Snowflake Festival] 106 OverDrive users:	590 101 OverDrive users (unique)
(Kids/Youth)	279 (85k / 194y)	262 (77k / 185y)	412 (134k / 278y)	269 (101k / 168y)	69 (22 k /47 y)
(Progs)	218- at lib (11 A prgs, 14 J prgs + 25 Snowflake Festival) 50 – out of lib (6 prgs) Seed Library: 13 users (135 pks) Class Visits: 15 (1 CVs @ lib) 225 (12 CVs to schools)	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)	265- at lib (34 prgs) + 84 (Snowflake Fest) 45 – out of lib (5 prgs) Class Visits: 69 (3 CVs @ lib)	105- at lib (16 prgs) + 206 (Snowflake Fest) 58 – out of lib (5 prgs) Class Visits: 24 (2 CVs @ lib) 43 (2 CVs to School)	0 – in liby (0 progs) 17 - Zoom programs (4 progs) 20 – Vax QR codes
Mtg Rm users	63 – in lib (11 mtg) 6 – Zoom (1 mtg)	41 – in lib (6 mtg) 0 – Zoom (0 mtg)	104 – in lib (16 mtg)	96 – in lib (13 mtg) 21 – Zoom (3 mtgs)	0 – in liby (0 mtg) 46 – Zoom (7 mtg)
Circulation	TOTAL: 2450 Lib: 1387 (A-733, J/T – 538) OverDrive: 855 (circ) Kanopy 208 (plays)	TOTAL: 2828 Lib: 1619 (A-956, J/T – 663) OverDrive: 989 (circ) Kanopy 220 (plays)	TOTAL: 2807 Lib: 1912 (A-985, J/T – 927) OverDrive: 794 (circ) Kanopy 101 (plays)	TOTAL: 2636 Lib: 1593 (A-943, J/T – 647) OverDrive: 899 (circ) Kanopy 144 (plays)	Total: 2286 Lib: 1444 (A-943, J/T- 501) OverDrive: 672 Kanopy 170 (plays)
Computer / Internet use (+wireless):	225 (116 / 100 wifi/ 9 tablet)	213 (101 / 103 wifi/ 9 tablet)	289 (87 / 191 wifi/ 11 tab)	153 (59 / 90 wif / 4 ipad)	74 33 / 41 wifi)
ILL borrowed/lent:	63 in / 58 out	86 in / 95 out	68 in / 55 out	50 in / 41 out	52 in / 44 out

Overview: February was down a lot from last year, but 2024 was unusually high (more programs, class visits and a lot more people for the Snowflake Festival). Circulation is also down. Visits are up from January, but not circulation. Overall it has been a slower winter.

Placement Student: This is moving ahead, but she will be doing her placement here in the summer, not spring.

Programs & Services:

Adult Programs:

Fitness for Your Aging Brain (2 groups) this is wrapping up at the end of March. It has gone well, but won't consider running again until the fall – people are not reliably available in spring & summer.

Other Adult programs are continuing into spring: **Guided Meditation** (run by Health Centre), **Book Club**, and **Off the Shelf**

Children's Programs:

StoryTime & Saturday Play Days: StoryTime attendance was continuing strong, but has been lower the last couple of weeks. The Saturday PlayDays continue popular overall, but it's a bit up and down.

Teen Chill & Chat: This is continuing to do well, but has been moved around a bit. This met twice in Feb, 3 times in March, and 2 sessions are planned for April. Three teens are running it with my support. There has been ongoing expenses for supplies and snacks (snacks are really important for teen programs), but this is being covered by the Friends of the Library.

March Break: This went quite well, especially the Builder's Workshop, Artists' Studio, and the Eco-Literacy photography program.

Mini Music Makers: Anya Perry (local musician/music teacher) this went well, although attendance was moderate. Anya is interested in doing another for preschoolers.

Upcoming Programs:

EarlyON baby program: This is scheduled for tomorrow (Mar 26). I am hoping to parlay it into regular or semi-regular baby programming.

Eco-Literacy Centre Workshop: This month's workshop will be on April 11 (a PA Day) and will focus on food webs and poetry (April is Poetry month).

Seedy Saturday: This will be April 12, outside if possible. It's a bit earlier this year to avoid Easter. We have speakers and displays lined up, including Diana Beresford-Kroeger, and are working on publicity. Some of our committee are unavailable this year, but we have some others to help. We think it will go well, if the weather cooperates.

Repair Café: I am talking with Sustainable MW about reviving this idea (it was a pandemic casualty). They are investigating how this is done elsewhere. We are looking at a bike tune-up, etc session in late Apr/early May.

Other: I need to follow-up on the Chair Yoga idea, and the possibility of another smartphone course.

Visits:

Playgroup: is on hiatus in March while the Community Centre undergoes renovations. I will do regular story visits once it's back in business.

Daycare: I continue to do story visits once a month to the toddlers and preschoolers. These are big groups.

Class Visits: I am continuing visits to 3 primary classes every other week to Merrickville School and monthly visits to classes at Montague School. One class from Ste Marguerite is coming to the Library, but it's a bit irregular.

Museum Passes: Demand was high during March Break, but we were pretty successful in keeping the passes moving. It's tapering off now, but still fairly steady.

Internet/Computers: Computer use has picked up. Currently everything seems to be working well.

InterLibrary Loans: ILLs have settled down from their January high and were at more usual levels for Feb & Mar.

Meeting Room: There has been steady use in Feb and Mar, from meetings as well as several library programs. There have been a lot of bookings for meetings in Feb. A new Photography Group is trying to start up monthly meetings, and there is a card game group that is starting up (they are meeting upstairs). In addition to the Chamber, Fair Board, Lions Club, TNIM, and the Knitting Club, the Soccer Club and the Scout leaders have had meetings here in Feb/Mar.

Collection: I've ordered Spr-Sum bestsellers. The Spring Scholastic sale is coming up in April.

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

Facilities: Nothing to report except the problem with the deck stain, and we are fixing the fairy door (door was broken).

Publicity/Outreach: Have been publicizing March Break, the survey, and am working on Seedy Saturday and other programs.

Partnerships/Outreach: See Item 11c. I've had a lot of meetings and emails related to all of these, so

they've been taking up quite a bit of my time.

- **Seed Library:** This continues to be much busier than last year, but we haven't had as many donated seeds. We may have to purchase some popular ones that are running out already.
- **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: The small libraries conference (Little Branches, Rural Roots) is coming up on May 8-9 in Perth, and I am planning to attend (currently working on arranging for Linda to cover for me). This conference is every other year and it's geared to small libraries, so it has some very useful sessions. I am also planning to attend some upcoming webinars on seniors programming, cybersecurity, etc, mostly through OLS, as well as virtual Library CEO meetings (population-based). Most of the webinars are free, but I will be able to get the costs for the others (including the conference) covered.

Donations: We've had several donations of books and DVDs and offers of more (many people are decluttering/downsizing).

Grants, etc: I've been working on the data for the Annual Survey (required for our provincial operating grant). I will be submitting the data by the end of this week.

Plans for the month: Seedy Saturday!; next strategic planning steps: compiling survey, etc data and following up with focus groups; the Scholastic sale; training/meetings (see above); continuing with visits to classes, etc; finding time for the literacy kits, more work on programming, if possible -- plus the usual library business.