

## Smiths Falls Public Library Board Minutes

**Date:** May 27, 2025  
**Location:** Library  
**Time:** 6:38 p.m.  
**Adjournment:** 8:28 p.m.

**In attendance:** C. Mariona M. Murphy  
M. Gallagher S. McLean Knapp  
C. Cummings A. Guerin  
A. Foster, CEO/Chief Librarian

**Regrets:** J. Miller S. Martin  
R. Cauley

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Agenda / Item / Issue	Discussion / Action
1. Call to order	A. Guerin called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.
2. Land Acknowledgement	The partial Land Acknowledgement Statement for the Town of Smiths Falls was read by A. Guerin. C. Cummings remarked that other boards he is on have different people read the land acknowledgment and they personalize their acknowledgement. It was decided that the board such further discuss this idea.
3. Approval of the Agenda	The Municipal Report and Montague Report were removed from the agenda. <b>Motion: A. Guerin moved the approval of the agenda as approved. Seconded by S. McLean Knapp. Carried.</b>
4. Minutes of March 25, 2025	<b>Motion: It was moved by M. Gallagher and seconded by S. McLean Knapp that the minutes of March 25, 2025 be accepted as circulated. Carried.</b>
5. Disclosure of Monetary Interest	None.
6. Business Arising from the Minutes	<i>MOU:</i> A. Foster and A. Guerin met with S. Clark to discuss the MOU. As the town's procurement policy is still being worked on, the plan is to have an updated MOU draft ready for the June board meeting with the hope of passing the MOU in September. A. Foster noted that the library wants the MOU more for clarification of roles than as a legal document as other libraries have had serious issues where there was considerable municipal staff turnover and the roles of the library and the municipality had not been formally defined.

We also plan to present the (hopefully) amazing first summer in the renovated children's department to council in September.

7. Correspondence

None.

8. Librarian's Report and Statistics

A. Foster summarized the March and April librarian reports. We received connectivity funding. She completed a submission form regarding the library's opposition to counter-tariffs on books. Merrickville Public Library also wants a new agreement with the township of Montague. March Break program signups went pretty well. The library finally started having the Ottawa Citizen delivered again not long before closing at the temporary location. CELA will stop producing physical CDs in July; we don't have a lot of use of these but it is concerning. Programs were well-attended given space constraints. Staff spent much of April packing, unpacking, and arranging which was challenging given construction work still being ongoing. Staff also did considerable weeding. Despite being closed for much of the month e-resource use was not high; high OverDrive/Libby hold times certainly didn't help. The library received a cheque from the Cogir Foundation as well as another \$5,000 from the Friends of the Library toward children's furniture. The library was successful in two grant submissions for summer students. A. Rankie had a very successful visit to the "Plant to Plate" day at Duncan J. Schouler Public School.

9. OPLA Psychological Health & Safety Survey Results

A. Foster noted that all staff listened to her urging and completed the survey. This was important as we would not have had library-specific results without at least five responses. She felt that the while there were some areas where there could be some improvement that the staff isn't doing too badly and there were no concerns about bullying etc. The library definitely isn't doing worse than other libraries generally. We could do similar surveys ourselves in the future.

10. Committee Updates

*Finance:*

Financial statements to April 30, 2025 were presented. There are no areas of concern at this point.

*Fundraising:*

A. Guerin has been in contact with the paper studio about the donor wall. After she takes measurements tonight, she should receive prototypes soon. The budget was discussed and the hope to is to keep costs to around \$500.



*Policy and Governance:*

A. Guerin mentioned the email from R. Cauley regarding replacement fees. It does seem like there is some confusion amongst the public about the difference between fines and fees. The library has advertised as being fine-free but not as fee-free. A. Foster noted that staff regularly tell the public that borrowing from the library is free unless they damage an item or keep it for a very long time. She had recently added a note to the automated overdue notices stating that replacement fees will apply if items aren't returned. She is concerned about people keeping items for excessively long periods (and perhaps using another card in the household in the meantime) if they know that won't have to pay a fee whenever they do return the items. Fine-free is meant to allow for people to return items a few days or weeks late without penalty not to keep items for months or years. She is also considering adopting automatic renewals which would give people longer with books but not with books with holds on them.

M. Gallagher summarized the Policy and Governance Committee's rationale for the proposed amendments to the policies being discussed. The goal was to tighten the wording and remove some redundancy. The *Unattended Children in the Library* needed to be amended after an incident with an older child left at the library at closing time.

**Motion: S. McLean Knapp moved that the following policies be amended as presented:**

- **OP-02: Circulation**
- **OP-09: Programming**
- **OP-13: Unattended Children in the Library**

**Seconded by C. Mariona. Carried.**

*Property Committee:*

C. Cummings has been busy giving tours to council members, Friends of the Library, board members, and media. Council members appear to recognize the need to spend additional money on the building (eg. the entrance). The long list of things required for occupancy has dwindled but we're not quite there for the top floor yet and it doesn't make sense to open only the lower two floors. The project is still around \$40,000 under budget and a number of improvements (eg. lower-level carpeting) were achieved that were not in the original budget. He also noted that he should soon have the price for the plumbing for the new kitchen.

11. Children's Desk Quotes

A. Foster presented three quotes for the staff desks for the children's area. There was a discussion about whether or not it was worth it to spend extra for an electric desk. The board preferred the quote for the electric desk option from Library Outfitters Furnishings &

Design as we've had a positive experience with this company (they provided the shelving) and other libraries in this area speak highly of them.

**Motion: A. Guerin moved to accept the electric desk option from Library Outfitters Furnishings & Design in the amount of \$15,975 plus HST.**

**Seconded by M. Murphy. Carried.**

12. Air Conditioning Quote

The older air conditioning unit is no longer working. We have received a quote from Denoco for replacement. The other unit on that floor is working very well and there is now air conditioning on the top floor. It was decided to monitor how comfortable the main floor is to see if this unit needs to be replaced or not.

13. Grand Reopening Plans

A. Foster is a bit concerned about the grand reopening happening on June 20/21 as we're still not open to the public. The board feels that it is best to hold this event as soon as possible. Plans for catering etc. will be made once the library has reopened.

14. New Business

None.


17. Date of Next Meeting

June 24, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

18. Adjournment


A. Guerin adjourned the meeting at 8:38 pm.

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A. Guerin, Chair

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A. Foster, Secretary