

Smiths Falls Public Library Board Minutes

Date: November 25, 2025
Location: Library
Time: 6:36 p.m.
Adjournment: 7:58 p.m.

In attendance: S. McLean Knapp C. Mariona
M. Gallagher J. Miller
R. Cauley A. Guerin
S. Martin
A. Foster, CEO/Chief Librarian

Regrets: M. Murphy C. Cummings

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Agenda / Item / Issue	Discussion / Action
1. Call to order	A. Guerin called the meeting to order at 6:36 p.m.
2. Land Acknowledgement	The partial Land Acknowledgement Statement for the Town of Smiths Falls was read by S. Martin.
3. Approval of the Agenda	<b>Motion: M. Gallagher moved the approval of the agenda as presented. Seconded by S. Martin. Carried.</b>
4. Minutes of September 23, 2025	<b>Motion: It was moved by S. McLean Knapp and seconded by R. Cauley that the minutes of September 23, 2025 be accepted as circulated. Carried.</b>
5. Disclosure of Monetary Interest	None.
6. Business Arising from the Minutes	A. Foster that the new microfilm reader is now working though installation was more complicated than expected. Staff will work on determining how long scanning takes and the quality of saved files before coming up with a report about the feasibility of in-house microfilm conversion. The old machine is being stored for now. S. Clark presented the MOU to council. A. Guerin has signed for the library though we don't yet have a signed copy from the town.
7. Correspondence	FOPL's strategic plan and new funding announcement were presented as correspondence. There was also a brief discussion about FOPL's role in advocating for Ontario's public libraries.

## 8. Relevant Articles

The first article was "Major upgrades to Smiths Falls Public Library sees improved access for some, but not all" by T. Clark in the Smiths Falls Record News from November 19, 2025. The contents of the article were not a surprise though the timing was unexpected as this issue was brought to the board's attention in June. A. Foster was contacted by O. Robinson from CBC Radio's Ottawa Morning; she referred her to A. Guerin. A. Guerin offered for CBC to visit the library but did not receive a response.

The second article was "The library is not a department: Why public library boards matter" by J. Scott in Municipal World's November 2025 issue. A. Foster thought it was a good summary of the relationship between public libraries and municipalities.

## 9. Librarian's Report and Statistics

A. Foster summarized the librarian's reports and statistics from September and October. September was quieter than the summer but still much busier than the previous year. The front step was finally fixed so we stopped hearing "crime scene" comments. We had a suspicious broken chair in the teen area. We had some issues with Canada Post billing of interlibrary loans. We also had issues with automatic notifications not being sent in Insignia. A woman asked to make an "official complaint" about the bannisters being dirty; A. Foster asked the cleaner to focus on cleaning them and left a phone message for the woman. The library withdrew from the large print pool as we're purchasing more large print titles these days and the ones we purchase are newer and circulate better. The Friends of the Library donated \$2,500 for the teen area. ESL conservation sessions started at the library. 1,2,3 Count with Me was not too popular. Shelf Discovery is a new service which allows customers to receive personalized book recommendations. E-audiobook usage continues to be very strong. A. Foster made a presentation to town council summarized the first four months in the renovated building. We were unable to apply for connectivity funding. We had some heating issues. The issue with automated notifications in Insignia was finally resolved. There were concerns about the lack of cleanliness/stickiness in the children's department; the cleaner is trying a different cleaning product. A. Rankie created her first escape room in nearly two years and it went well overall. There were 320+ children who visited the library during Skele-Bration but unfortunately many parents would not let their children stay and explore the library though many children appeared eager to do that. The tote bag design contest went well with 7 entries and 70 votes. Both Stories & More and Mother Goose on the Loose had good attendance in October. The Stories &



More session during Fire Prevention Week involved visiting the fire station and the children really enjoyed the visit. Mother Goose on the Loose is proving a better fit than Baby Time as parents often have more than one child and Mother Goose on the Loose better accommodates children of different ages. The show by Little Ray's Reptiles was very popular and tickets were gone within 5 minutes. We are going to focus more on emphasizing that our programs are free. We had a Girl Guide group visit. The final fire plan was approved by the fire department. D. Campbell has been busy with displays and digitization and is considering creating a births, deaths, and marriages index which would be a lot of work but would help answer many queries. Overall, the statistics for both months were good.

**Motion: A. Guerin moved to the accept September and October's reports and statistics. Seconded by S. McLean Knapp. Carried.**

10. Board Christmas Party

C. Mariona has booked The Vault for 3 pm on Sunday, December 14 for the board Christmas party. A. Foster sent an e-vite to staff and politicians. Board members can let C. Mariona know if they'll be attending. We'll likely have about 30 people attend.

11. Committee Updates

*Finance:*

The financial statements as of October 31, 2025. As C. Illman has left the town, we not receive statements as Promptly for the next while.

**Motion: J. Miller moved to accept the financial statements as of October 31, 2025. Seconded by R. Cauley. Carried.**

A. Foster noted that based on the recommendation of P. Dowber that all items previously listed in the capital section of the budget with the exception of the front door replacement and window replacement were moved to the operating section due to being below \$15,000. The audit fees and insurance figures were increased due to updated information. The budget was otherwise the same as the previous draft.

J. Miller noted that the total capital requests for the town currently stand at \$29 million dollars. They deferred discussing the specific requests but the capital budget is not looking pretty and tough decisions will need to be made by town council.

**Motion: M. Gallagher moved to accept the Smiths Falls Public Library operating and capital budget 2026. Seconded by C. Mariona. Carried.**

*Fundraising:*

Nothing to report.

*Policy and Governance:*

M. Gallagher noted that the committee just needed to fine-tune the policies and that they were pretty straightforward. The committee was able to shorten some of the policies.

A. Foster will ensure that the policies are added to the library's website as this way they can be accessed by anyone interested.

**Motion: J. Miller moved that the following policies be amended as presented:**

- **OP-07: Children's Services**
- **OP-08: Study Room Usage**
- **OP-19: Young Adults in the Library**
- **OP-22: Cybersecurity**

**Seconded by A. Guerin. Carried.**

*Property Committee:*

A. Foster noted that we're still waiting for a quote on the electrical work for the kitchen that we could get started on the plumbing. The plumbing has two options of similar amounts (\$2,310 and \$2,260) with one option being labour-heavy and the other option being materials-heavy. The kitchen installation also had two options (\$7,165.24 and \$7,873.20); the cheaper option would include a larger stove. The room is tight, however, so the cheaper option might not be feasible.

**Motion: A. Guerin moved to proceed with the plumbing and kitchen installation and to go with the options recommended by the experts.**

**Seconded by S. McLean Knapp.**

12. Municipal Report

J. Miller covered her report during the budget discussion.

13. Montague Report

S. Martin has heard that Montague is waiting to hear from the board about negotiations and that they would like these discussions to be separate from the broader discussion with the town. Montague has not, however, provided the library with any formal request for discussions. There was uncertainty about whether it was a good idea to separate the discussions or not. A. Foster noted that Montague should have an idea of our minimum request based on the 2025 grant request of \$30,000 which they refused; they've also been told several times that the library is looking for a 4 or 5-year agreement with pre-determined annual increases and the cost based on a per capita basis from census numbers. Beckwith's agreement with the Carleton Place Public Library is a good example of this sort of agreement. A. Foster will let M. Morris know what we've heard from Montague so the town won't be blindsided.

14. New Business

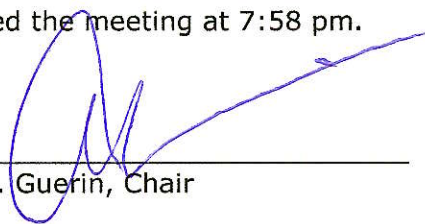
None.

15. Date of Next Meeting

January 27, 2026 at 6:30 p.m.


16. Adjournment

A. Guerin adjourned the meeting at 7:58 pm.



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A. Guerin, Chair



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A. Foster, Secretary