

Smiths Falls Public Library Board Minutes

Date: **September 23, 2025**
Location: **Library**
Time: **6:35 p.m.**
Adjournment: **8:21 p.m.**

In attendance: **S. McLean Knapp** **M. Murphy**
M. Gallagher **J. Miller**
C. Cummings **A. Guerin**
S. Martin (part-time) **R. Cauley**
A. Foster, CEO/Chief Librarian

Regrets: **C. Mariona**

Guest: **S. Clark**

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| <b>Agenda / Item / Issue</b>         | <b>Discussion / Action</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Call to order                     | A. Guerin called the meeting to order at 6:35 p.m.                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| 2. Land Acknowledgement              | The partial Land Acknowledgement Statement for the Town of Smiths Falls was read by J. Miller.                                                                                                                                                                         |
| 3. Approval of the Agenda            | <b>Motion:</b> <b>C. Cummings moved the approval of the agenda as presented. Seconded by J. Miller. Carried.</b>                                                                                                                                                       |
| 4. Minutes of March 25, 2025         | <b>Motion:</b> <b>It was moved by A. Guerin and seconded by C. Cummings that the minutes of June 24, 2025 be accepted as circulated. Carried.</b>                                                                                                                      |
| 5. Disclosure of Monetary Interest   | None.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| 6. Business Arising from the Minutes | C. Cummings asked about personalized land acknowledgements. He will say his at the next meeting. S. Martin said has a list of local Indigenous elders.                                                                                                                 |
| 7. Correspondence                    | FOPL's member update from September 10, 2025 was presented. They provided updates on their advocacy work at various municipal conferences and relevant legislative updates.                                                                                            |
| 8. Librarian's Report and Statistics | A. Foster summarized the librarian's reports and statistics from June, July, and August. June's door count was a huge increase (110.9%) over the previous June as many people wanted to see the newly renovated space. July and August were also busy. Circulation was |

also improved though not by as much as the door count. We particularly noticed an increase in visits by parents with children in strollers. We received several compliments on the smell of the basement; it seemed like this may have been because it didn't smell great previously. We had another service call for the lift but this was apparently quite normal in the beginning. The janitor's sink in the new accessible washroom filled with fecal water just before the grand reopening; we did end getting a plumber to come to same day to fix the issue. We had two summer students start working. We received about 150 applications for the open shelving assistant position which was surprising but this may have been because there are really no qualifications for this position. The Friends of the Library book sale raised around \$2,600. We received a call from the Kingston Frontenac Public Library asking about our furniture after they saw it on social media. Our new discoveries included realizing that we must always have a second staff person upstairs during story times in case anyone needs to be let into the lift. We had a complaint about "dirty bannisters." We had some issues with paper towels in the accessible washroom toilet. The customer came back with insects in DVDs and has been banned from borrowing until November 1; Abell confirmed that the insects were German cockroaches. Our booking system worked well overall during the summer. We were busy during Old Home Week. We had a two-day Internet outage. We, like all libraries, having had billing issues with Canada Post where what they've charged and what the put on the receipts did not match at all; they'll claimed that this is normal for system changes. We found one bat that looked dead but actually wasn't dead (it squirmed once in the net) but we haven't seen any since. We asked for puzzle donations and quickly had to ask for them to stop as we were inundated. We met with Lanark & Renfrew Immigrant Settlement Services to discuss having ESL classes at the library. Our new phone system is working. The K Pop Demon Hunters party was a late addition to the summer programming but filled up very quickly so we'll likely do similar programming in the future. Friday movies weren't as well-attended as hope; it may have been the specific movies or the timing.

**Motion: S. Martin moved to the accept June, July, and August's report and statistics. Seconded by S. McLean Knapp. Carried.**

9. MOU (S. Clark)

S. Clark noted that town is eager to solidify the relationship with the library formally. She also noted that even after signing the MOU, the town will still be open to changes and discussions. She plans to check-in at six months and one year to ensure that it's working.

She said that the town's procurement policy has been adopted in principle. They're still waiting on buy Canadian information from the federal government. The new policy will have higher thresholds while still looking out for the best use of funds for the public interest. She noted the application of the policy is up to the library. There will be procurement templates and the town is happy to help when asked. She also noted that there are out clauses for both sides. S. McLean Knapp asked about town branding guides and AODA; S. Clark responded that the library has autonomy and that AODA requirements are implied as they are legislatively required.

**Motion: A Guerin motioned for the board to accept and sign the MOU. Seconded by S. Martin. Carried.**

S. Clark further noted that the MOU will be presented to town council on October 27.

10. Children's Summer Programming Survey Results

A. Foster noted that the response to the survey was small but the responses were very positive. Parents liked the robotics and eco-literacy programming. Robotics programming from Steampunk won't continue next year though we can still borrow the kits and laptops for a week or two next summer; this will be dependent on finding the right summer staff which isn't easy. Eco-literacy programming is dependent on grants but we hope that it will continue. There were some helpful comments from parents and we do plan to offer some non-story time programming for 4 and 5 year olds next summer.

11. Township of Montague Agreement Status

The Township of Montague has provided little information and what information they've provided has been last-minute. This afternoon they sent a letter asking us say that we're in a "perpetual agreement" by October 3. A. Foster thinks that they just need this letter for their PLOG application which is due on October 16. They wish to again pay \$12,500 which is less than the increasingly number of cardholders would cost as non-residents. J. Miller noted that the library is just one piece of the bigger puzzle between the Town of Smiths Falls and the Township of Montague. There was concern about jeopardizing the town's negotiations by signing (or not) signing this letter.

**Motion: C. Cummings moved from the library to consult with the town's CAO to get advice and then to empower A. Guerin to sign or not sign the letter. Seconded by M. Murphy. Carried.**

12. Microfilm and  
Digitization Options

A. Foster outlined three options for our microfilm collection: 1) replace the microfilm reader, 2) digitize the collection, or 3) replace the microfilm reader for the last time and then slowly digitize the collection. She recommended the last option as it provide the best access and least interruption for users. C. Cummings noted that he'd been approached by a member of the public about the poor condition of our current machine; J. Miller had been contacted by a different member of the public. A. Foster noted that the last digitization grant she saw excluded municipally funded organizations; she noted that there are some staffing grants but we would need equipment, space, and the right person all of which could be a challenge here. She also noted that we have a large number of physical newspapers that have not been digitized but this would be costly and likely take one person a full year to digitize.

**Motion: C. Cummings motioned for staff to present a 5-year operational plan to achieve digitization.**  
**Seconded by J. Miller. Carried.**

13. Friends of the Library  
Sign Request

M. Murphy noted that the Friends of the Library would like to install a sign downstairs in the library indicating that they've been around since 1994. C. Cummings had some wording suggestions. M. Murphy noted that the Friends of the Library would pay for the sign.

**Motion: M. Murphy motioned to allow the Friends of the Library to put up a sign in the library.**  
**Seconded by J. Miller. Carried.**

14. Committee Updates

*Finance:*

A. Guerin noted how helpful the meeting with C. Illman, the town's deputy treasurer was. The financial statement to August 31, 2025 were modified based on discussions in that meeting.

A. Foster noted that the operating budget would be pretty much status quo but with a small amount for video games and three extra shelving assistant hours per week (which is needed to help with the lift in times of light staffing). She hopes we will have more exact staffing numbers from the town by the October meeting. Revenue is fairly unchanged with the exception of the Montague Township grant. The capital budget is where real decisions need to be made. New windows will be expensive; C. Cummings thought it was worth asking while J. Miller thought it might be asking too much so soon after the renovation. It was decided that one air conditioning unit would be sufficient as the only complaints this summer were to do with the stairway upstairs; the main floor was cool enough with just the

one working unit. There was also some discussion about whether it was best to wait for the building condition assessment or not before deciding on what capital projects to prioritize. The board will need to pass the budget at next month's meeting to meet the town's deadline.

*Fundraising:*

A. Rankie's updated donor wall proposal was presented.  
**Motion: A. Guerin moved to proceed with A. Rankie for the donor wall. Seconded by S. Martin. Carried.**

*Policy and Governance:*

A. Foster will send out dates for the next meeting which will be in early November. A study room policy will definitely be among the policies discussed.

*Property Committee:*

C. Cummings noted that there were flaws identified on the roof of the addition and \$15,000 is being held back but there are no safety concerns. There are now no legal issues. Corrugated flooring for accessibility still needs to be added.

15. Municipal Report

J. Miller will give a thorough report in October.

16. Montague Report

S. Martin had departed so no report was given.

17. New Business

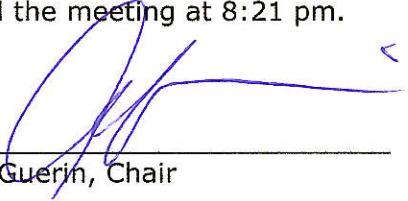
None.

18. Date of Next Meeting

October 28, 2025 at 6:30 p.m.

19. Adjournment

A. Guerin adjourned the meeting at 8:21 pm.



A. Guerin, Chair



A. Foster

A. Foster, Secretary