

MINUTES OF CARLETON PLACE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

January 21, 2026

7:00pm, Zoom Teleconference/Barbara Walsh Room

IN ATTENDANCE

Shelley Smith	Chair
Linda Guetta	Trustee / Beckwith Representative
Mark Hinton	Trustee / Carleton Place Council Representative
Aaron Niedbala	Trustee
Mike Jeays	Trustee
Meriah Caswell	CEO
Heidi Sinnett	Secretary

WITH REGRETS

Carson Mok	Trustee
Monique Cooke	Vice Chair

The meeting was called to order at 7:00pm.

1. Respect and Acknowledgement Declaration:

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the land on which we gather is the traditional unceded, unsurrendered territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabeg People. We are meeting on land that has been inhabited by Indigenous peoples from the beginning. We are grateful to the generations of people who have been, and continue to be, stewards of this place.

2. Additions to and approval of the Agenda

Meriah noted the addition of item 8a) Trustee Council Update by Linda Guetta. Moved by Mike Jeays, seconded by Linda Guetta that the Agenda for the January 21, 2026 Library Board Meeting be accepted as amended. CARRIED.

3. Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

None.

4. Meeting Minutes

- a. Minutes from the November 19, 2025 Library Board Meeting.
Moved by Mike Jeays, seconded by Mark Hinton that the Minutes from the November 19, 2025 Library Board Meeting be accepted as presented. CARRIED.

5. Correspondence

- a. Incoming – none.
- b. Outgoing –

- i. December 15, 2025 – Minister Joel Lightbound, MP. The Library Board sent a letter to the Minister of Government Transformation, Public Works and Procurement regarding change in responsibility for the shipping rates for books.
- ii. January 7, 2026 – Ontario Library Service – Connectivity reimbursement. Extra connectivity funds were made available for projects already underway in 2025. Meriah submitted an invoice to complete the funding for new WiFi antennae at \$3276.

6. Librarian's Reports from November, December 2025

The Board discussed receiving a financial report regarding year-end numbers for 2025 prior to the audit report in April. Meriah will follow up with Trisa McConkey to see if that is possible.

After the Friends of the Library Information Sessions this month, Linda Guetta noted that the response was positive and that the next meeting be scheduled for February 26, 2026. Moved by Mark Hinton, seconded by Mike Jeays that Linda Guetta be the Liaison between the Library Board and the Friends of the Library Group. CARRIED.

Moved by Linda Guetta, seconded by Aaron Niedbala that the Librarian's Reports from November 2025 and December 2025 be accepted as presented. CARRIED.

7. Financial Report – Meriah will contact Trisa McConkey for an updated Financial Report for the February meeting.

8. Committee Updates –

- a. Trustee Council Update by Linda Guetta. After taking part in the Trustee Council's online session following the meeting on November 20, 2025, Linda Guetta shared their suggestion of using the Value of Libraries Toolkit to demonstrate the library's worth to Council. Meriah has updated the numbers from the previous VOLT and will ask for a spot on an upcoming Council Agenda.

9. Strategic Planning Implementation Updates.

- a. Increase Community Connections
- b. Adapt and Grow with the Community
- c. Raise the Profile of the Library

The Friends of the Library Information Sessions worked to increase community connections, adapt and grow with the community, and raised the profile of the library.

Meriah attended a Lanark County Support Services Christmas Tea to show appreciation for the work their community members do at the library, which also increased the library's community connections.

Several new programs such as Flow and Stroll, Family Pride Connect, and the Silver Linings Society aimed at seniors, show the library adapting and growing.

10. Business Arising from the Minutes

- a. 2026 Library Board Work Plan. After discussion, the Board decided to make achieving Accreditation a priority for 2026.

Moved by Mike Jeays, seconded by Aaron Niedbala that the 2026 Library Board Work Plan be accepted as a working document. CARRIED.

- b. Board Evaluation – The Board Chair discussed the results from the Board Evaluation and suggested the CEO add a refresher on laws that apply to Libraries as well as a full review of the Strategic Plan to a future agenda to make sure the Board is still on track in 2026.

11. Policy Review and Updates

- a. HR-01 Human Resources Policy
- b. HR-02 Health and Safety Policy
- c. HR-03 Violence and Harassment Policy

Moved by Mark Hinton, seconded by Mike Jeays that the Corporation of the Town of Carleton Place HR-01 Human Resources Policy, HR-02 Health and Safety Policy, and HR-03 Violence and Harassment Policy be adopted. CARRIED, Linda Guetta, opposed.

12. New Business

- a. 2026 Library Board Meeting Schedule. The Board will not hold a meeting in March 2026 due to the March Break. Moved by Mark Hinton, seconded by Aaron Niedbala that the 2026 Library Board Meeting Schedule be accepted as amended. CARRIED.
- b. 2026 Library Closures and Special Hours. Discussion centered around being closed too long during the Christmas week. The Library will instead open from 9am – noon on Monday, December 28, 2026. Moved by Mark Hinton, seconded by Linda Guetta that the 2026 Library Closures and Special Hours be accepted as amended. CARRIED.
- c. Local History Room - report. After much discussion regarding the various possibilities for the Local History Room, decisions will be deferred until the February meeting so that Board members can tour the space. Meriah will contact Jennifer Irwin at the Carleton Place and Beckwith Heritage Museum to see if they could take any Local History items. Meriah will also prepare a cost breakdown of furniture items for a possible staff room.
- d. Director of Community Services- report. Discussion focused on the job description for the new position that seemed to overstep the Library Board's Governance. The Board Chair will set up a meeting with the Town CAO Diane Smithson to discuss having the wording changed in the job description to better reflect the current relationship between the CAO and the Library Board. Moved by Linda Guetta, seconded by Mike Jeays that the Library Board Chair request a meeting with CAO Diane Smithson

regarding the wording of the current job description for the new Director of Community Services. CARRIED.

13. Closed Session

- a. Closed session to discuss matters relating to an identifiable individual. Moved by Linda Guetta, seconded by Mike Jeays, to enter an In-Camera session at 8:52pm to discuss personal matters about an identifiable individual, including municipal or local board employees. CARRIED.

The Board returned to open session at 9:30pm.

14. Date of Next Regular Meeting: February 18, 2026 at 7:00pm. Location: Zoom/Barbara Walsh Room.

15. Adjournment – 9:31pm.

Chair

Secretary

Date

Date