

Western Counties Regional Library

Board Meeting Minutes

December 12, 2024

The regular quarterly meeting of the Western Counties Regional Library Board was held on Thursday, December 12, 2024 in the Community Room of the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Library building in Yarmouth, Nova Scotia.

Present:

Councillor Sherry Thorburn Irvine, Board Chair, Municipality of Shelburne.

Councillor Kathy Bourque, Municipality of Argyle.

Councillor Amy MacKinnon, Municipality of Barrington.

Councillor Réanne Evans, Municipality of Clare.

Councillor George Manzer, Municipality of Digby.

Councillor Phil Mooney, Municipality of Yarmouth.

Mayor Clay Kenney, Town of Clark's Harbour.

Councillor Elizabeth Acker, Town of Shelburne.

Erin Comeau, Secretary – Treasurer.

Present via Zoom:

Councillor William McCormick, Town of Digby.

Councillor Candace Malik, Town of Lockeport.

Councillor Belle Hatfield, Town of Yarmouth.

Regrets:

Ellen Burton, Yarmouth Public Library & Museum.

Absent:

1. Call to Order.

The Board Chair, Sherry Thorburn Irvine called the meeting to order at 12:59 pm. and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Adoption of the Agenda.

Elizabeth Acker moved and George Manzer seconded the adoption of the agenda.

Motion carried.

3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the September 19, 2024 board meeting were circulated. There being no errors or omissions, Kathy Bourque moved and Elizabeth Acker seconded the approval of the September 19, 2024 board meeting minutes.

Motion carried.

4. Board Member Introductions.

Erin asked all board members to introduce themselves, indicate which municipality/organization they represent and why they chose to sit on the library board.

5. Board Orientation and Review Board Priorities.

- a) Erin gave an overview of the regional library structure, how Western Counties Regional Library fits within the public library system in Nova Scotia. She summarized library services and touched on the importance and the labour-intensive work associated with physical book loans.

She summarized the challenges that libraries face and the work that has been done as part of the latest funding review process. Emphasis was placed on the need to address low wages and reliance on part-time employment to provide library service.

Erin will schedule meetings with MLAs in the new year to discuss the importance of libraries and the challenges ahead if a funding formula that supports sustainable library services is not approved.

Board member responsibilities were reviewed.

6. Business Arising from the minutes.

A brief discussion was held on the acquisition of a new vehicle. A new vehicle has not yet been purchased since Erin still has concerns over the ability to customize a new vehicle to ensure the health and safety of employees.

William McCormick left the meeting at this point.

7. Chair's Report.

Sherry Thorburn Irvine encouraged board members to read all the materials sent in the board meeting packages. She is very hopeful that the board will continue to move in a positive direction in the next four years, and that the new funding formula will make this possible.

8. Director's Report

Erin sent her Management Activities report in the board package. She asked if anyone had any questions about the contents of her report. She reported also reported that since 2022, all the library branches in the region had been distributing COVID-19 Rapid Test kits. The Nova Scotia Government's testing strategy recently changed and rapid test kits are no longer available in great quantities. Steady supply is also not guaranteed. For these reasons, Western Counties Regional Library is no longer distributing rapid test kits. Staff recently received naloxone training and kits will be placed in all branches.

8. Financial Statement.

The October 31, 2024 Financial Statement was circulated. Erin indicated that the salaries line was the most significant line to review since the majority of the library's goes towards supporting staff salaries. She explained that the library does not own any of the buildings that it operates in and that it pays rent for headquarters operations.

Amy MacKinnon moved and Kathy Bourque seconded the approval of the October 31, 2024 Financial Statement.

Motion carried.

9. New Business.

9.1 Appointment of Committee Members.

Erin asked the new board members which committee they would like to sit on and the vacant seats were filled.

George Manzer moved and Clay Kenney seconded the appointment of Committee Members from November 2024 to June 2025.

Motion carried.

A revised Committee Members list will be emailed to members soon.

9.2 Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility in the Workplace Statement.

A new Personnel Policy: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion and Accessibility in the Workplace Statement, was email with the board package.

Elizabeth Acker moved and Phil Mooney seconded the approval of a new EDIA Statement.

Motion carried.

10. Other.

None.

11. Around the Table.

None.

12. Next Meeting.

The next quarterly board meeting will be held on Thursday, March 20, 2025 at 1:00 pm in the Community Room of the Izaak Walton Killam Memorial Library.

13. Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm on a motion from Elizabeth Acker