

The Township of Muskoka Lakes Public Library Board
MINUTES - REGULAR LIBRARY BOARD MEETING
Monday September 21, 2026

A Regular Meeting of The Township of Muskoka Lakes Public Library Board was held on September 21, 2026 at 1pm at the Norma and Miller Alloway Muskoka Lakes Library (Port Carling Branch) of the Muskoka Lakes Public Library system.

Present:

Heidi Berninger – Vice Chair
Deb Stokes (joined at 2:00pm)
Val Duke - Chair
Marg Buddo
Andrew Whitfield
Barb Bridgeman (virtual)
Coun. Mary Ellen McIntyre
Doug Crichton (virtual)

1. Call to order

V. Duke called to order at 1:04pm

2. Respect and Acknowledgement Declaration

“The Muskoka Lakes Public Library acknowledges that these lands and waters are the traditional homeland of the Ojibway Nation and the Huron /Wendat Nation and includes the Wahta Mohawks Nation and communities of the Metis Nation of Ontario. We acknowledge their stewardship throughout the ages.”

3. Disclosure of Pecuniary Interest

None declared.

4. Adoption of Agenda

a. Regular Meeting – September 21, 2026

Consideration of a resolution to adopt the Library Board Agenda dated September 21, 2026.

Resolution Number 1 – 09/21/26

Moved by H. Berninger; Seconded by M. McIntyre; be it resolved that the Library Board agenda be adopted.

Carried.

5. Receipt/Adoption of Minutes

a. Regular Meeting – August 11, 2026

Consideration of a resolution to adopt the meeting minutes for the August 11, 2026 Board Meeting.

Resolution Number 2 – 09/21/26

Moved by D. Crichton; Seconded by M. Buddo; be it resolved that the Library Board Minutes for August 11, 2026, be adopted.

Carried.

6. Business Arising from the Minutes

a. Library Service and Space Review – Update from CEO

The CEO reported that the consultants circulated a draft report ahead of a committee meeting on September 17 to confirm the report's direction aligned with the Library's expectations. The draft included over 30 short-, medium- and long-term recommendations for the Port Carling and Bala branches, along with higher-level service and facility expansion ideas.

The consultants will now finalize the report and prepare an implementation plan outlining timing, resource requirements, KPIs and milestones. They will send that draft back to the committee for review before finalizing any reporting.

The community survey closed September 7 with 314 responses. Over 90% of respondents rated MLPL as Excellent or Good, and staff and service quality were consistently identified as the Library's top strength across the survey, staff interviews and stakeholder interviews.

Consultants have provided the library with the survey results and the CEO will compile those into an additional summary for Board review.

b. Accreditation – Update from CEO

The Library is awaiting confirmation of an audit date from OPLGC; the audit remains tentatively scheduled for mid-to-late October. The CEO suggested the Policy Committee be proactive and begin drafting an AI policy.

c. BDO Financial Final Report

The CEO noted misstatements identified on page 14 of the BDO report and will confirm the details with Township Treasury staff.

Discussion was held on the Library's treatment of restricted revenue. Currently, "regular" donations (e.g., donation jar contributions) are included in regular monthly revenue and remitted to the Township. "Restricted" donations (typically those from the Friends of the Library and those made to the Giving Tree) are passed to the Township and held until spent, at which point they are recognized as both revenue and expense in that year.

The CEO noted that most of these funds may not be restricted from a municipal finance perspective and will review how other libraries treat this type of revenue — for example, directing such funds to a single Board Designated Reserve, recognized as revenue when received and drawn on as needed, rather than maintaining several smaller “restricted” accounts.

7. Financial Documents

a. August 2026 Financial Statement

The CEO noted a possible backlog in the entry of invoices and statements and will confirm with the Township’s accounts payable staff that expenses are being entered correctly and as received.

Consideration of a resolution to adopt the Library Financial Statement for August 2026.

Resolution Number 3 – 09/21/26

Moved by M. McIntyre; Seconded by H. Berninger; be it resolved that the Library Board financial statement for August 2026 be adopted.

Carried.

b. August 2026 Restricted Statement

c. August 2026 Scotiabank Statement

8. Reports

a. CEO Report – September 2026 Board Meeting

b. 2027 Draft Budget Report

The CEO reviewed both reports. The Board supported moving the 2027 Draft Budget Report to the next steps, with the CEO to discuss options with the Township and discuss further at future meetings.

9. Policy Development and Review

a. GOV-02 Board Orientation Training Evaluation 09.21.26

Consideration of a resolution to approve policy GOV-02 Board Orientation Training Evaluation.

Resolution Number 4 – 09/21/26

Moved by M. McIntyre; Seconded by D. Stokes; be it resolved that the Library Board approve policy GOV-02 Board Orientation Training Evaluation as presented.

Carried.

b. GOV-03 Purpose and Duties of the Board 09.21.26

The Board reviewed the policy updates. The CEO will ensure the Code of Conduct is signed by all members at the beginning of the new term.

Discussion was held regarding the Strategic and Accreditation Planning Committee. Committee participation will be added to the Board plan as a regular check-in point, so members can

continue to review committee work or join a committee. The CEO will add this to the Board plan.

Consideration of a resolution to approve policy GOV-03 Purpose and Duties of the Board.

Resolution Number 5 – 09/21/26

Moved by D. Stokes; Seconded by H. Berninger; be it resolved that the Library Board approve policy GOV-03 Purpose and Duties of the Board as presented.

Carried.

c. GOV-07 Board Advocacy 09.15.26

Consideration of a resolution to approve policy GOV-07 Board Advocacy.

Resolution Number 6 – 09/21/26

Moved by H. Berninger; Seconded by M. McIntyre; be it resolved that the Library Board approve policy GOV-07 Board Advocacy as presented.

Carried.

d. OP-19 The Library and Political Elections 09.15..26 rev

Consideration of a resolution to approve policy OP-19 The Library and Political Elections.

Resolution Number 7 – 09/21/26

Moved by B. Bridgeman; Seconded by D. Stokes; be it resolved that the Library Board approve policy OP-19 The Library and Political Elections as presented.

Carried.

10. New and Unfinished Business

a. Board recruitment update/Legacy Document review – Update from CEO and D. Stokes

The Board recruitment information is now live on the website. Materials will be prepared over the next month, with the following timeline:

- October 27 (the day after the municipal election): the Township's Call for Members, including the Library Board, will be issued, linked to the website and shared on the Library's social media.
- Approximately November 23: application deadline.
- Applicants will be vetted to confirm they meet the requirements; the Mayor will then review applicants and make appointment recommendations to Council.
- First week of December: a special Council meeting is proposed to pass the appointment by-laws.

This allows approximately one month to promote the opportunity. The Township has advised that anyone applying before the window opens will be contacted and asked to submit during the open application period. The Board also reviewed the legacy document prepared by D. Stokes outlining the Board's current strengths and needs, to help guide recruitment of the next Board.

b. October Meeting date discussion

Discussion was held on moving the October meeting to the week following Thanksgiving on October 12. The Clerk has confirmed that the November 10 meeting will be the final meeting of the current Board, as the Board's term ends November 15.

c. December gathering discussion

Discussion was held on a gathering for incoming and outgoing Board members, tentatively December 22, 2026, in conjunction with an event the Library was already planning.

d. FOPL Webinars for staff and board members

CEO encouraged interested Board members to sign-up to view two upcoming webinars offered through FOPL.

11. Closed Session

None.

12. Adjournment

Consideration of a resolution to adjourn the September 21, 2026 Regular Library Board Meeting at 3:26pm.

Resolution Number 8 – 09/21/26

Moved by H. Berninger; Seconded by D. Stokes; be it resolved that the September 21, 2026 Regular Library Board Meeting be adjourned at 3:26pm.

Carried.

 _____	CHAIRPERSON
 _____	SECRETARY
<u>10/13/26</u>	DATE