NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
March 18, 2026
ROSBERG GALLERY, VICTORIA AVENUE LIBRARY & GOOGLE MEET

PRESENT: A. Andres-Jones (Chair), J. Anstruther (Vice Chair), L. Lococo, B. Ness, J. Roddy, K. Tsiantoulas

REGRETS: M. Fraiman, S. Mongrain, T. Tredwell

STAFF: A. Subnaik Kilgour, C. Lee, M. MacLaren, K. Rimnyak

Meeting was chaired by A. Andres-Jones

CALL TO ORDER:
Meeting called to order at 4:34 pm

THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT STATEMENT WAS READ INTO THE MINUTES
The Chonnonton people have called these lands where we are gathering home for thousands of years and more recently, the Anishinaabe and the Haudenosaunee have been sharing the land as One Dish, One Spoon Treaty territory. We would like to acknowledge the enduring resilience of the First Nations, Metis and Inuit people who call this territory home.

1. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: 2026-030 To approve the agenda of the March 18, 2026 Board Meeting
MOVED BY: J. Roddy
SECONDED BY: J. Anstruther
MOTION CARRIED

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
None.

3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES
3.1. Regular Minutes of February 18, 2026 Board Meeting

MOTION: 2026-031 To approve the minutes of the February 18, 2026 regular meeting
MOVED BY: L. Lococo
SECONDED BY: J. Roddy
MOTION CARRIED

4. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

None.

5. CONSENT AGENDA

5.1. Department Reports

5.1.1. NFPL In the Media – February 2026, K. Stewart, Communications Associate

5.1.2. Q4-2025 Finance Update, K. Rimnyak, Finance and Administrative Coordinator

5.2. Board Information and Correspondence

5.2.1. Good news re Bill C-15 and impact on libraries, Dina Stevens, Executive Director, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

5.2.2. Library Impact and Community Support Overview, Niagara Falls Public Library

5.3. Articles

5.3.1. Niagara Region chair resigns over Hitler book controversy, The St. Catharines Standard

The article was discussed in relation to recent local media coverage, and it was noted that the Library had been contacted by media regarding the matter. The Board was advised that the Library previously held a copy of Mein Kampf, which went missing in December of 2025. Prior to that, the item had circulated approximately 30 times over a 17-year period and, given its low use, it was not considered justifiable to replace within the current budget. It was further stated that the title is in the public domain and remains accessible through other sources. It was also cautiously noted that, within a historical and academic context, the work has relevance in understanding how democracies can deteriorate.

5.3.2. Hamilton's downtown library may temporarily close amid safety concerns, CHCH News

It was noted that the Hamilton downtown library did not proceed with closure due to the community's reliance on its services, despite significant operational challenges.

5.3.3. Closing Hamilton Central Library 'off the table' for now as staff look at other ways to stop onsite drug use, CBC News

5.3.4. Troubles, and joy, at downtown library, The Hamilton Spectator

5.3.5. Hamilton Public Library looks to check cards, screen visitors at Central branch as drug concerns persist, CBC News

Alternative measures to closure are being explored at Hamilton Central Library to address safety concerns. The implementation of visitor screening and library card requirements for entry at Hamilton Public Library was discussed. Clarification was provided that individuals experiencing homelessness may obtain a library card using a letter from a shelter as proof of address.

5.3.6. Drug use and overdoses run rampant in Canada's public libraries, CTV News

The extent of challenges being experienced in Hamilton was discussed, including frequent overdose incidents requiring naloxone administration, as well as the involvement of social workers. These conditions were noted as part of broader pressures affecting public libraries.

5.3.7. Government of Sask, NDP and CUPE continue to spar over issue of library safety, CTV News

Ongoing discussions regarding library safety in other jurisdictions were noted, including the need for appropriate responses and resources.

5.3.8. Saint John libraries board seeks extra security as safety incidents spike, CBC News
5.3.9. Oakville main library to move to old post office site, keep façade, The Oakville Beaver
5.3.10. Sault librarians rise up against city's TikTok ban, SooToday
5.3.11. Showing Up Editorial, Library Journal
5.3.12. The Newest 'Third Spaces'? Restaurants and Bars That Feel Like a Living Room, Eater

The article was discussed in relation to how other sectors are developing highly designed, comfortable environments and positioning them as "third spaces." It was noted that these spaces were visually impressive and illustrated how the concept is being applied outside of libraries.

5.4. Amalgamation Articles and Information Bundle

A. Subnaik Kilgour noted that the amalgamation materials had been gathered together for the Board's information. The Board expressed interest in how a one-city versus four-city model would affect the library, particularly where some municipalities have unionized library staff and others do not. The Board further discussed potential impacts on governance, service delivery, and costs, including questions regarding duplication of services and overall effectiveness of the proposed models.

MOTION: 2026-032 To receive the consent agenda of March 18, 2026
MOVED BY: J. Anstruther
SECONDED BY: L. Lococo
MOTION CARRIED

6. ACTION ITEMS

6.1. 2026 Capital Budget Amendment Report, K. Rimnyak, Finance and Administrative Coordinator

K. Rimnyak presented the 2026 Capital Budget Amendment Report and described it as a positive outcome of the Library's fundraising campaign approved in the prior year. She noted that the Library was successful in raising the intended funds and exceeding its goal. As a result, funding was secured for the purchase of a microfilm machine with the assistance of an end-of-year donation. It was explained that the project had not been included in the original capital budget as fundraising targets

had not yet been confirmed. The report therefore adds the microfilm machine as a capital project, funded through campaign proceeds and related contributions, including funds designated to local history.

MOTION: 2026-033	To approve an amendment to the approved 2026 Capital Budget to add capital project, Microfilm Machine - Local History Campaign Purchase, funded through fundraising proceeds and $3,000 from the Special Purpose Reserve (Walker Fund interest)
MOVED BY:	J. Roddy
SECONDED BY:	K. Tsiantoulas
MOTION CARRIED	

6.2. Reserve Funding of 2025 Capital Spending Report, K. Rimnyak, Finance and Administrative Coordinator

K. Rimnyak outlined total capital spending for 2025 and the associated funding sources, and sought approval to transfer funds from reserves to cover these expenditures. It was noted that a portion of the funding is drawn from the property reserve, with the remainder funded through development charges and grants. The report also included a summary of all active 2025 capital projects and their current status, and it was noted that completed projects will be communicated to the City for inclusion in their closure processes.

Discussion followed regarding current financial reporting processes. A. Subnaik Kilgour acknowledged the work of K. Rimnyak in managing reporting requirements during the implementation of a new ERP system, noting that timelines have been impacted and that support from the City is ongoing. It was noted that progress is being made and that reporting processes are stabilizing. K. Rimnyak advised that both the Library and the City are experiencing backlog pressures, with a number of items awaiting approval through City finance processes. She further noted that fourth quarter reporting remains preliminary, as entries and approvals are still outstanding.

MOTION: 2026-034	To approve the funding of 2025 capital project spending in the amount of $350,090.74 from the Property Reserve
MOVED BY:	J. Anstruther
SECONDED BY:	L. Lococo
MOTION CARRIED	

6.3. Policy Index

6.3.1. Right to Disconnect Policy

A. Subnaik Kilgour noted that the Right to Disconnect Policy had been reviewed by Peninsula. Following approval, A. Subnaik Kilgour noted that when the policy was first introduced there was limited guidance available and that it continues to evolve. She further noted that there may be situations requiring staff to be contacted outside regular hours, such as during closures or other operational needs, and that the policy will be revisited as required.

MOTION: 2026-035 To approve the updated policies, and authorize staff to implement any legislated or ministry-required changes immediately to maintain compliance with provincial and ministry requirements. This includes the following policies and policy statements:

- Right to Disconnect Policy

MOVED BY: J. Roddy
SECONDED BY: J. Anstruther
MOTION CARRIED

7. COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE SESSION

MOTION: 2026-036 To move into Committee-of-the-Whole
MOVED BY: J. Anstruther
SECONDED BY: K. Tsiantoulas
MOTION CARRIED

The Niagara Falls Public Library Board went "in camera" at 4:58 pm in order to address matters pertaining to:

- Personal matters about an identifiable individual; and
- a proposed or pending acquisition or disposition of land by the board.

K. Tsiantoulas departed at 6:14 pm

MOTION: 2026-040 To rise from Committee-of-the-Whole
MOVED BY: B. Ness
SECONDED BY: L. Lococo
MOTION CARRIED

The "in camera" session was completed at 6:48 pm.

MOTION: 2026-041 To accept the business conducted in-camera on March 18, 2026
MOVED BY: B. Ness
SECONDED BY: J. Anstruther
MOTION CARRIED

8. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Subnaik Kilgour sought approval to reschedule the Wednesday, April 15 board meeting to allow staff to attend a full-day conference in Toronto hosted by the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions. It was agreed to reschedule the meeting to Thursday, April 23.

A Board member raised concerns received regarding the condition of storyboards along a local trail. A. Subnaik Kilgour advised that the holders are believed to be damaged, allowing water to enter and cause deterioration, and that Library staff are working with City staff to identify a solution. C. Lee advised that interim measures are being explored to improve their condition.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 6:52 pm

NEXT MEETINGS

April 23, 2026
May 20, 2026
June 24, 2026