NIAGARA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
MINUTES OF THE REGULAR MEETING
February 18, 2026
ROSBERG GALLERY, VICTORIA AVENUE LIBRARY & ZOOM

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

REGRETS: M. Fraiman, S. Mongrain

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

Meeting was chaired by A. Andres-Jones

CALL TO ORDER:
Meeting called to order at 4:45 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: 2026-013 To approve the agenda of the February 18, 2026 Board Meeting
MOVED BY: J. Anstruther
SECONDED BY: L. Lococo
MOTION CARRIED

2. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY AND CONFLICTS OF INTEREST
None

3. COMMITTEE-OF-THE-WHOLE SESSION

MOTION: 2026-014 To move into Committee-of-the-Whole
MOVED BY: T. Tredwell
SECONDED BY: J. Anstruther
MOTION CARRIED

The Niagara Falls Public Library Board went "in camera" at 4:46 pm in order to address matters pertaining to:

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

MOTION: 2026-021 To rise from Committee-of-the-Whole
MOVED BY: T. Tredwell
SECONDED BY: J. Anstruther
MOTION CARRIED

L. Lococo departed at 5:45pm

M. Love departed at 5:46pm

A. DeGiorgio departed at 6:15pm

The "in camera" session was completed at 6:30 pm.

MOTION: 2026-022 To accept the business conducted in-camera on February 18, 2026
MOVED BY: J. Anstruther
SECONDED BY: T. Tredwell
MOTION CARRIED

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

4.1. Regular Minutes of January 21, 2026 Board Meeting

MOTION: 2026-023 To approve the minutes of the January 21, 2026 regular meeting
MOVED BY: J. Anstruther
SECONDED BY: J. Roddy
MOTION CARRIED

5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

A. Andres-Jones read the following statement into the minutes: "As requested, D. Stevens, Executive Director of the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, advised that the Public Library Operating Grant has not increased since its introduction in 1992 and was reduced in 1996, with no changes since."

Board members discussed opportunities for advocacy regarding the grant. J. Anstruther advised that he had reached out to MPP Wayne Gates in a personal capacity to inquire about the grant and related advocacy efforts. The MPP's office indicated interest in meeting with the Board to discuss library concerns and hear current information that could be brought forward at Queen's Park.

A. Subnaik Kilgour suggested that a meeting could be arranged outside of a regular Board meeting to

allow for a more informal discussion. It was noted that the Board Executive should attend and that the opportunity could be open to other Board members who wished to participate.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

6.1. Department Reports

6.1.1. Q4 Progress Report / 2025 Wrap Up, Year 2 Work Plan / 2024-2028 Strategic Plan Report, Laura Martin, Community Engagement Manager, Becky Dixon, Operations Manager, Antonio DeGiorgio, Human Resources Administrator, Ashleigh Dronyk, Information, Resources & Connections Manager

6.1.2. EarlyON Q3 & Q4 2025 Report, L. Martin, Community Engagement Manager

6.1.3. NFPL In the Media – January 2026, K. Stewart, Communications Associate

6.1.4. Q4 2025 YTD System Statistics, L. Martin, Community Engagement Manager

6.1.5. Multilingual Collection Assessment Report, S. Topping, Information, Resources and Connections Leader

A. Andres-Jones commented that it was helpful to see the collection refreshed and rebalanced across the system.

6.1.6. Innovation Hub Report, L. Martin, Community Engagement Manager

6.1.7. 2023 Annual Report

6.2. Board Information and Correspondence

6.2.1. Thank You Card / Holiday Party Participation, J. Burgess, Chief Administrative Officer, City of Niagara Falls

6.2.2. Historical PLOG information, D. Stevens, Executive Director, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

6.2.3. Media Release: City of Niagara Falls extends Public Engagement for Unhoused Action Plan, City of Niagara Falls

6.2.4. FOPL Winter Update, Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

6.2.5. 2026-27 Pre-Budget Submission, Ontario Library Association and Federation of Ontario Public Libraries

6.2.6. Important Changes to Ontario's Occupational Health and Safety Act Take Effect January 1, 2026, Hicks Morley LLP

6.2.7. Statement on the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's (AMO) Updated Report on Homelessness in Ontario, Ontario's Big City Mayors

A. Subnaik Kilgour noted that the item was included for information as the City's Mayor is now participating in the Big City Mayors group.

6.2.8. Public Notice: Provincial state of emergency on homelessness, mental health, and addiction, City of Thorold

6.2.9. St. Catharines Public Library Space Leasing Advertisement, St. Catharines Standard

6.3. Articles

6.3.1. 'Not a lot of wiggle room': Niagara Falls library may cut services despite funding boost, Niagara Falls Review

A. Andres-Jones referenced the article about the Library's appearance at the City Council meeting regarding the budget and noted that L. Lococo spoke well at the event.

6.3.2. Downtown Hamilton library to close Sundays amid safety concerns, Hamilton Spectator
6.3.3. Resident questions Newmarket library's shift in user data reporting standards, Newmarket Today

Brief discussion occurred regarding the reporting of active library cardholder statistics and how usage is measured.

6.3.4. Opinion | Public libraries foster feelings of social connectedness for older adults, Hamilton Spectator

A. Andres-Jones noted that the topic of social connection had been discussed previously and commented that the Library may also be involved in work related to social connection among teens.

6.3.5. Kashechewan teen evacuated to Niagara Falls, Ont., says she misses 'being on the land', CBC News
6.3.6. Gale rules out budget cuts to Niagara Region's social services, long-term care, St. Catharines Standard
6.3.7. Big-city mayors sound alarm as Ontario homelessness rises, Municipal World

MOTION: 2026-024 To receive the consent agenda of February 18, 2026
MOVED BY: T. Tredwell
SECONDED BY: K. Tsiantoulas
MOTION CARRIED

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.1. Amendments to the City's 2024 Development Charges (DC) By-law and Background Study – Executive Summary, A. Subnaik Kilgour, Chief Executive Officer/Chief Librarian

T. Tredwell asked whether development charge considerations would be raised in relation to the upcoming discussion with the City regarding space leasing. A. Subnaik Kilgour advised that City staff are aware of the issue and that it has already been raised in discussions.

A. Subnaik Kilgour explained that the only change reflected in the amended Development Charges Background Study was the removal of the proposed temporary library branch. She noted that the temporary branch had initially been included by the City's consultants to bridge service needs until a new facility could be developed; however, because the Chippewa branch had closed, the temporary branch was no longer considered to demonstrate additional growth and therefore did not qualify under the development charge criteria. She advised that the decision was made to remove that component while maintaining the development charge funding associated with the future multi-use facility project.

T. Tredwell also asked whether the bookmobile had been considered within the development charge calculations. A. Subnaik Kilgour advised that development charge funding previously allocated to the bookmobile has already been utilized and that the bookmobile's square footage is not used in the development charge calculations.

MOTION: 2026-025	To receive the Amendments to the City's 2024 Development Charges (DC) By-law and Background Study - Executive Summary Report as presented at the February 18th, 2026, Regular Board Meeting
MOVED BY:	K. Tsiantoulas
SECONDED BY:	T. Tredwell
MOTION CARRIED	

7.2. Revised 2026 Operating Budget, K. Rimnyak, Finance and Administrative Coordinator

K. Rimnyak presented the revisions to the 2026 Operating Budget following the reduction in City operating funding. She explained that staff incorporated the required reduction of $57,864 while also updating the budget using more current financial information available since the original budget preparation in October.

K. Rimnyak advised that the majority of the reductions were achieved through labour adjustments of approximately $37,000, including the removal of planned staffing additions that had been proposed in the original budget. Additional savings were realized through lower-than-expected insurance costs of approximately $11,000, along with smaller reductions across several operational areas such as advertising, signage materials, and staff event expenses. Adjustments were also made to the EarlyON budget based on updated information received from the Region.

J. Anstruther commented on the challenges created by changes to the City's budget direction after the Library had already prepared its initial budget submission. He noted that repeated revisions place significant pressure on staff and require considerable effort to meet shifting financial targets. J. Anstruther also expressed concern about comparisons made between the Library and the Innovation Hub, noting that the organizations operate under different mandates and funding requirements. He thanked staff for the work required to revise the budget multiple times.

MOTION: 2026-026	To approve the revised 2026 operating budget as presented at the February 18, 2026, Regular Board Meeting.
MOVED BY:	T. Tredwell
SECONDED BY:	J. Anstruther
MOTION CARRIED	

7.3. EarlyON Supervision of Children Policy Report, L. Martin, Community Engagement Manager

The EarlyON Supervision of Children Policy was discussed. It was noted that the policy aligns the program's provincial supervision requirements with the Library's existing supervision policy for children. No questions were raised.

MOTION: 2026-027 To approve the EarlyON Supervision of Children Policy and the updated EarlyON Policy Manual Index; and authorize staff to implement any legislated or ministry-required changes immediately to maintain compliance with provincial and ministry requirements.
MOVED BY: J. Anstruther
SECONDED BY: T. Tredwell
MOTION CARRIED

7.4. Policy Index

7.4.1. Unforeseen Closure Policy
7.4.2. Occupational Health and Safety Policy Statement
7.4.3. Workplace Violence and Harassment Statement
7.4.4. Workplace Violence and Harassment Policy

Brief discussion occurred regarding the policy updates listed under the Policy Index. No substantive questions were raised.

MOTION: 2026-028 To approve the updated policies and policy statements, 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:

- Unforeseen Closure Policy
- Occupational Health & Safety Policy Statement
- Workplace Violence & Harassment Policy Statement
- Workplace Violence & Harassment Policy

MOVED BY: T. Tredwell
SECONDED BY: J. Roddy
MOTION CARRIED

7.5. 2024 Annual Report

C. Lee noted that the 2024 Annual Report now includes the finalized financial statements following completion of the audit. It was also noted that the report will be presented to the City at a future date. No questions were raised.

MOTION: 2026-029 To approve the 2024 Annual Report
MOVED BY: T. Tredwell
SECONDED BY: K. Tsiantoulas
MOTION CARRIED

8. OTHER BUSINESS

Brief discussion occurred regarding the March 18 Board meeting date, which falls during March Break. No changes to the meeting date were proposed.

J. Anstruther mentioned a potential fundraising opportunity involving ticket sales for a basketball event and advised that he had shared the information with staff for consideration.

9. ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 7:01 pm

NEXT MEETINGS

March 18, 2026
April 15, 2026
May 20, 2026