

REGULAR BOARD MEETING - NOTES
March 17, 2025

Members Present:

Coun. Steve Gillespie, Coun. Darren O'Quinn, Coun. Kim Sheppard- Campbell and Jean MacAulay-MacIntyre representing the Cape Breton Regional Municipality, Coun. Perla MacLeod and Terry Murray, representing Victoria County.

Regrets: Ann Dunn

Vacant: Province of Nova Scotia Library Board Appointees (2 vacancies).

Call to Order:

The meeting was called to order at 6:05 PM by Councillor Steve Gillespie, who was appointed Interim Chair.

Approval of Agenda:

MOTION: Moved by Coun. Darren O'Quinn, seconded by Terry Murray to approve the agenda as presented. **MOTION CARRIED**

Approval of Accounts:

Lisa clarified a previous error in the October payment listing was due to a typographical mistake carried over from a previous month.

MOTION: Moved by Coun. Kim Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Coun. Darren O'Quinn to approve the accounts as presented. **CARRIED**

Welcome:

Lisa welcomed new Board members and provided an overview of key ongoing and recent initiatives, including:

- Construction of a new Baddeck Library
- Relocation of Ingonish Library
- Cancellation of the bookmobile service
- Closure of the Florence Library
- Advocacy for a new Central Library
- Library funding challenges

Financial Statement to the end of January 2025:

Due to a transition in bookkeeping services, financial statements were not available. MNP Ease is currently updating the financial records. Coun. Gillespie requested statements be circulated to members once complete.

Approval of Previous Minutes:

- November 25, 2024 Board Meeting:

MOTION: Moved by Terry Murray, seconded by Coun. Darren O'Quinn to approve the minutes. **CARRIED**

Lisa provided a follow-up regarding a sewer line concern at McConnell Library. CBRM Buildings Supervisor confirmed there are no issues.

- January 30, 2025, Executive Meeting:

MOTION: Moved by Terry Murray, seconded by Coun. Kim Sheppard-Campbell to approve the minutes. **CARRIED**

E-Vote Confirmation:

Approval for contracting MNP Ease for off-site bookkeeping (non-audit services).

Result: 7 in favour, 0 opposed.

MOTION CARRIED

Election of Chair, Vice-Chair and Treasurer:

- Chair: Coun. Perla MacLeod
Nominated by: Coun. Kim Sheppard
Accepted – Elected by acclamation
- Vice-Chair: Coun. Darren O’Quinn
Nominated by: Coun. Steve Gillespie
Accepted – Elected by acclamation
- Treasurer: Terry Murray
Nominated by: Coun. Steve Gillespie
Accepted – Reappointed by acclamation

Correspondence:

None received.

Regional Librarian’s Report:

Lisa provided highlights from her report, which was circulated to board members in the meeting package:

- The Borrow-By-Mail service launched in January. To date, 30 patrons have signed up. This new service replaces our former bookmobile service.
- CBRL Bookmobile sold at asking price.
- McConnell Library will receive a generous donation of \$250,000 over 10 years to support the children’s collection from the family of late Rita E. Gillis. In recognition of the donation, the children’s area will be renamed The Rita E. Gillis Children’s Reading Room.
- A donation of \$10,000 was received from the John and Jeanne Eyking Foundation. The donation will support refreshing the children’s area and enhance programming at the North Sydney Library.
- Baddeck Library was closed several days in February due to a prolonged storm system. A letter was also sent to Victoria County concerning snow removal. Coun. Perla MacLeod requested an estimate for snow removal in preparation for the upcoming budget deliberations for Victoria County council.
- The Glace Bay library reported more leaks in the roof. The Landlord is planning to replace the roof.
- Circulation is up over last year and 24,000 people participated in programming across the region. Coun. Steve Gillespie requested that the circulation stats be emailed to all Board members after the year-end.

MOTION: Moved by Coun. Kim Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Coun. Perla MacLeod to accept the report.

CARRIED

Fundraising Report – March 2025:

Report was included in the package.

MOTION: Moved by Terry Murray, seconded by Coun. Darren O’Quinn to approve the report.

CARRIED

A discussion took place around the 75th Anniversary celebration initiative to commemorate this milestone.

Programs Reports – November 2024:

The report was included in the package.

MOTION: Moved by Coun. Kim Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Terry Murray to approve the report.

CARRIED

Library Funding Update:

Lisa provided a summary of 2025–26 funding developments. A report was included in the meeting package. The Library Funding Review Committee presented several funding models to the Province, all requiring increases to staff salaries, collections, and technology. However, the 2025–26 provincial budget included no new funding. CORL has requested an additional \$1.6 million in bridge funding.

New Central Library:

Lisa summarized completed studies and recent site evaluations for a new Central Library, including:

- 2012 Feasibility Study (new build vs. renovation)
- 2016 Feasibility Study (space needs, options)
- 2021 Operations Review (recommended 45,000 sq ft)
- 2024 Courthouse Viability Review
- 2024 Site Suitability Analysis of five downtown locations:
 - Former Courthouse
 - Current McConnell Library
 - Prince & George Street Corner
 - Bargain Shop on Charlotte Street
 - Former Cape Breton Post building

Findings to be presented to Council in April.

Library Accessibility Plan:

A copy of the updated Accessibility Plan was circulated in the meeting package. Public sector bodies are required to update their plan by April 1st. CBRL was part of an inter-regional committee carrying out this work. Going forward each of the regions will form separate accessibility committees.

MOTION: Moved by Terry Murray, seconded by Coun. Darren O’Quinn to approve the plan.

CARRIED

Policies:

a) Board by-laws:

A special meeting will be scheduled to review.

b) Youth Safety Policy:

MOTION: Moved by Coun. Perla MacLeod, seconded by Coun. Darren O’Quinn to approve the revised policy. **CARRIED**

c) Posters and Other items for Display:

MOTION: Moved by Coun. Kim Sheppard-Campbell, seconded by Coun. Darren O’Quinn to approve the revised policy. **CARRIED**

Library Branches:

a) Ingonish Library:

The final day at the old location is March 20, 2025. Renovations at the new location by the Fire Department are ongoing.

In Camera Session:

MOTION: Moved by Terry Murray, seconded by Coun. Kim Sheppard-Campbell to move in camera.

CARRIED

MOTION: Moved by Terry Murray to return to open session.

CARRIED

Other Business:

- LBANS: Library regions have been asked to rejoin LBANS to formally dissolve the association and distribute remaining funds. Coun. Kim Sheppard-Campbell will serve as the representative.
- Coun. Gillespie requested that a letter be sent to the Minister to inquire about the status of the vacant provincial appointee positions.

Date of next meeting:

June 18, 2025, 5 pm start AGM to follow.

Adjournment:

On the motion from Coun. Steve Gillespie, the meeting adjourned at 9:04 pm.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Mulak, Secretary
Cape Breton Regional Library Board