

# Whitby Public Library Board Minutes

**Date:** Sept 17, 2025

**Time:** 7:00 p.m.

**Place:** Board Room, Central Library

**Present:**

Liam Nichols (Chair)  
Art Maki  
Maria McDonnell  
Kate Campbell  
Akhil Kapoor (virtual until 7:22pm, then in person)  
Lorraine Gray (virtual)  
Peter Creer (virtual)  
Chris Leahy (virtual, until 7:50pm)

**Regrets:**

Geoff Anderson

**Also Present:**

Rhonda Jessup, Chief Executive Officer  
Joel Sutherland, Director, Community and Service Development  
Michelle Frenette, Director, Corporate Services  
Christy Harper, Director, Technology and Operations  
Mandy Beaton, Finance and Administration Associate

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## 1. Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

Meeting was called to order at 7:05 p.m.

Moved by Maria McDonnell

Seconded by Art Maki

That the Agenda be approved along with the amendments of switching the order of items 9b and 9g, as well as modifying item 9g to being an in camera item. Additionally, items 7 and 5 were switched in order on the agenda, due to time constraints.

CARRIED

## 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared.

**3. Karey Ann Large, CEO, Whitby Chamber of Commerce**

**a) Presentation of 30 Years of Whitby Chamber of Commerce Membership Certificate**

Karey Ann Large recognized the Whitby Public Library for being a member of the Whitby Chamber of Commerce for 30 years and thanked the Board for the Library's past and ongoing valuable contributions to the community.

**4. Michael Latimer, Supervisor, Asset Management, Financial Planning, Financial Services Department, Town of Whitby**

**a) Whitby Asset Management Plan**

Michael presented an overview of the Town of Whitby's Asset Management planning process. He explained how it encompasses all Town department including the Library, with WPL's largest asset being its collection. The Asset Management Plan is approved by Council and includes proposed levels of service for all asset categories. Capacity, condition and availability are all used to assess the Town's assets. He stated that they remain open to working with the library in this area.

**5. Councillor's Report (C. Leahy)**

Chris Leahy spoke on Board advocacy regarding the budget process and encouraged Board members to engage in conversation with Town council members to help address this challenge. The Harvest Festival in Brooklin is coming up on Sat. Sep 20th, which would provide a good networking opportunity for this.

Plans for this advocacy piece were deliberated on, including WPL staff working with Senior Town staff to help them better understand potential service impacts to the Library that would result from a cut in funding.

The Board chair reiterated the Board members' intent to continue their advocacy on behalf of WPL.

**6. Consent Agenda Items**

Moved by Kate Campbell

Seconded by Maria McDonnell

That the Consent Agenda items be approved as distributed.

CARRIED

## **7. Chief Executive Officer's Report**

Rhonda shared the news with the Board that WPL staff have completed 3 separate submissions for the Ontario Public Service Awards.

We are installing 4 new printers at all three locations and have moved to a new cloud-based payment system which is more secure for patrons.

We have replaced guest passes for patrons with a new "access card" which includes a junior card version for children. This was launched last week and during that time, 173 people have already signed up for these cards, which can act as a gateway to full library membership.

There are 2 new high school co-op students, 2 placement students from LIT programs and 1 HR student who have recently started at WPL.

WPL has launched a new dementia friendly collection which provides books with large print and simple stories, as a resource for supporting those in the community dealing with dementia and their caregivers.

Harvest Fest in Brooklin is coming up on Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>, as well as Door Open Whitby on Oct. 18<sup>th</sup> which WPL will be participating in by offering basement tours to the public.

The Mayor's office contacted us regarding CTV holding their "Toy Mountain" broadcast from our Central Library location on Tues. Dec. 9<sup>th</sup>. This initiative is carried out in partnership with the Salvation Army and there will be drop-off locations for toys at all 3 branches.

## **8. Business Arising from Previous Minutes**

None at this time.

## **9. New Business**

### **a) Strategic Plan Update**

Rhonda highlighted the results of the recent staff engagement survey which had an excellent participation rate of 91%. There were overall positive results, with the work environment being rated above industry norms. 67% of staff reported being very or extremely fulfilled in their roles. 87% feel positively about their coworkers, which notably is 26 points above average, according to the polling vendor we used.

Key themes that emerged were recognition, communication and inclusion of staff voices. Administration has already begun working on making improvements in these

areas by offering CEO chats and town hall meetings, holding new weekly staff meetings and by managers discussing these topics directly with staff. Feedback from staff will continue to be used as part of the information that is built into future work plans.

The Board congratulated WPL staff on the great results from the staff engagement survey and commented on the remarkably high ratings received for overall staff satisfaction and engagement. It was noted that completing a survey of this type for the first time creates a useful baseline for the future.

**b) Posting and Distribution of Materials Policy (motion)**

Moved by Kate Campbell

Seconded by Maria McDonnell

That the Posting and Distribution of Materials Policy be approved as distributed.

CARRIED

**c) Board Working Group Update (A. Maki)**

Art shared with the Board a brief background on this. The Board working group began its work in the spring by reviewing the existing board committees, their activities and terms of reference. The group also completed informal benchmarking against other local libraries and came up with recommendations for the Board.

This group is recommending that both the HR Committee and Planning Committee be disbanded and their terms of reference cancelled. It is also recommending that a CEO Evaluation Committee be formed instead.

There will also be an annual process whereby the board chair can determine if there are any ad hoc committees that will be required that year.

**d) Board Procedural Bylaws (motion)**

These were presented at the Board meeting in May. No further changes were made, and the 30-day notice period has now been fulfilled.

Moved by Akhil Kapoor

Seconded by Art Maki

That the revised Board Procedural Bylaws be approved as distributed.

CARRIED

**e) Dissolution of Current Board Standing Committees (motion)**

Moved by Maria McDonnell

Seconded by Kate Campbell

That the Current Board Standing Committees be dissolved.

CARRIED

**f) CEO Evaluation Committee – Approval of Members and Terms of Reference (motion)**

Motion to amend agenda to add “approval of members” to item 9.f. above.

Moved by Kate Campbell

Seconded by Maria McDonnell

That item 9.f. above be amended to include Approval of Members of the CEO Evaluation Committee, as well as the Terms of Reference.

CARRIED

It was noted that the Board’s past HR Committee had already been performing the task of CEO evaluation, so this is not new to this Board.

Discussion occurred as to which Board members would like to join this committee besides the Chair and Vice-Chair, which resulted in Art Maki, Kate Campbell and Peter Creer volunteering / being nominated.

Moved by Art Maki

Seconded by Maria McDonnell

That the Terms of Reference be approved and the CEO Evaluation Committee for the 2025 year consist of the members nominated this evening.

CARRIED

**g) Budget Update (in camera)**

Moved by Art Maki

Seconded by Kate Campbell

That the meeting go into closed session at 8:16 p.m. to discuss this item

CARRIED

Moved by Art Maki

Seconded by Maria McDonnell

That the meeting go back into open session at 8:35 p.m.

CARRIED

#### **10. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, October 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m., in the Board Room, Central Library, 405 Dundas Street West, Whitby

#### **11. Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 8:36 p.m. on a motion by Kate Campbell.

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Board Chair

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Secretary