Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library Board
Minutes

September 24, 2026 6:00 p.m.
Library Auditorium

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Richard Thomas, Chair (City of Owen Sound)
Rosemary Buchanan, Vice-Chair (Township of Georgian Bluffs)
David Adair (City of Owen Sound)
Tobin Day (Township of Georgian Bluffs, Councillor)
Deborah Eaton (City of Owen Sound)
Frank Emptage (Meaford Public Library)
Marion Koepke (City of Owen Sound, Councillor)
Elizabeth Thompson (Township of Chatsworth, Councillor)

MEMBERS ABSENT/REGRETS:

Janet Walker (City of Owen Sound)

STAFF PRESENT:

Tim Nicholls Harrison, CEO
Nadia Danyluk, Deputy Chief Librarian
Lindsey Harris, Administrative & Facilities Manager

GUESTS PRESENT:

None

COMMENCEMENT: 6:22 P.M.

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Richard Thomas, Chair, at 6:22 p.m.

2. ADDITIONAL ITEMS

None

3. DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTEREST AND THE GENERAL NATURE THEREOF

None

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

26-26 Moved by Frank Emptage THAT the minutes of the July 16, 2026 meeting of the Library Board be approved as presented.

Carried.

5. DEPUTATIONS/QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

6. CORRESPONDENCE

Harris reported that there were no items of correspondence circulated in the package.

7. REPORTS AND MATTERS TABLED

7.1 Board Chair's Report

No report.

Councillor Elizabeth Thompson entered the meeting.

7.2. CEO's Report

"I was rescued by librarians everywhere I went. Librarians saved my internal life."
"Your profession is the greatest profession… You democratize knowledge. Nothing on earth is more important." - Gloria Steinem

7.2.1. Library Service Index and *August at a Glance*: Please see the attached performance report and infographic.

7.2.2. Key Statistics: Library membership increased to 11,986, which is 150 more than at the same time last year. In August, we had 15,492 library visits and circulated 34,515 materials. Patrons used an additional 2,221 materials within the library during the month. There were 5,267 uses of technology. Our online outreach totaled 87,139. The library provided information assistance 2,616 times.

7.2.3. Savings to Patrons: The value of the physical materials that our library members borrow on a visit is shared, now, on their receipt which is printed at the main circulation desk. During the month of August, our library members as a community saved a total of $469,478 by borrowing from the library. The total for 2026, so far, is $3,397,192.

7.2.4. Staff Anniversaries: We extend congratulations to the following staff members on their work anniversaries. We thank them for their time, effort, skills and talents!

Tim Nicholls Harrison	Admin	38 years
Christina Mollon	Adult Learning Services	25 years
Sharon Wagenaar	Public Services	22 years
Lindsey Harris	Admin	19 years
Dale Albrecht	Technical Services	15 years
Shauna Doyle	Public Services	13 years
Renata Libicz	Public Services	9 years
Cvitka Marun	Public Services	9 years
Rebecca Steer	Public Services	7 years
Sarah Chamberlain	Youth Services	6 years
Arwen Greenwood	Public Services	6 years
Ben Lyons	Admin	6 years

Cassie Wood	Youth Services	6 years
Lindsay Schlonies	Public Services	4 years
Katie Skinner	Adult Learning Services	3 years
Katherine Scott	Adult Learning Services	2 years

7.2.5. Appreciation for Our Summer Student: We'd like to thank Mackenna Galbraith and River Emonts for all their help this summer. We would be challenged to provide the quantity and quality of summer programming that happens at the library without their hard work, enthusiasm and dedication. We appreciate the funding support that we received for from Canada Summer Jobs and Young Canada Works for these summer positions. We wish River and Mackenna the very best with their academic pursuits this fall.

7.2.6. TD Summer Reading Program: 2026 was a record year! Thanks to the 356 library members in our TD Summer Reading Club! Together we logged 8739 books! Congratulations! Both numbers are the highest in the history of summer reading at the library, surpassing the all-time numbers achieved last summer. Special thanks to our Youth Services staff and our summer students for making the summer reading program such a success.

7.2.7. Fall Holiday Closures: Though the library will be closed on the dates listed below, library patrons will still have access to our online resources. A limited number of staff will be available on the morning of November 11th, to support the usual community Remembrance Day needs, but regular library services will be unavailable.

- National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on Wednesday, September 30th
- Thanksgiving Day on Monday, October 12th
- Remembrance Day on Wednesday, November 11th

7.2.8. Union Library Agreement - 5 Year Review: Representatives from Chatsworth, Georgian Bluffs, Owen Sound and the Library Board attended a meeting on September 10th to review the Agreement. The budgeting process for 2027-2031 will use the 2022-2026 percentage breakdown of library memberships which is: 60% from the City of Owen Sound, 22.6% from Georgian Bluffs and 9.2% from Chatsworth. The Meaford Public Library's share will be 8.2%.

7.2.9. Library Service Agreement – Meaford Public Library: Meaford Public Library has requested that the Library Service Agreement be extended for two more years. We have reviewed the suggested changes and updated the percentage of budget costs to 8.2% based on the 2022-2026 OSNGUPL membership statistics. Please see attached agreement.

27-26 Moved by Frank Emptage THAT the Library Board approve the 2027-2028 Library Service Agreement with the Meaford Public Library.

Carried.

7.2.10. Deputy Chief Librarian on Bayshore Radio: On September 2nd, Nadia Danyluk was the guest on Open Line with Philly Markowitz. Nadia provided a wonderful overview of the library, our programs and services and upcoming events. The show is available for listening at https://www.893cfos.ca/2026/09/02/the-open-line-with-philly-markowitz-34/

7.2.11. Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit: The Valuing Ontario Libraries Toolkit (VOLT) is a resource that was developed to help libraries across the province measure their impact in our communities. We utilized VOLT to measure the Social Return on Investment (SROI). It reflects an approximate dollar value of benefit that is created for each dollar that is invested in the public library by our funding municipalities.

The benefits of funding the library, when looking at the social and cultural infrastructure, can be seen in:		
Civic Engagement = $67,152	Culture = $785,385	Economic Development =$2,491,967
Education = $1,140,035	Entertainment & Leisure =$7,718,832	Inclusion & Well Being = $257,998
Space = $1,779,902	Total = ~ $14,240,000	

In total, our work with VOLT calculated a value of over 14.24 million dollars a year for our local community. This is a value of $357.89 per resident of Chatsworth, Georgian Bluffs and Owen Sound or $833.31 per household. For every one dollar, our municipal funders provide, there is $8.49 of value delivered by the library to our local communities.
The VOLT statistics will be shared with our funders in the Fall as part of our budget process. We hope that it will be part of the ongoing discussion about the value of the library to our library members and municipal funders. Special thanks to Dale Albrecht for diving into VOLT to make it accessible for all of us. Her skills and knowledge have been vital to the success of this project.
7.2.12. Adult Learning Centre New Website: We received funding this year from the Ministry of Skills, Training and Education to make changes to promotional materials and website of the Adult Learning Centres. We were required to switch from the Ministry's past *Literacy and Basic Skills* branding to their much-improved *Get Set* approach. We worked with Banja Solutions, the company that helped us redesign the library website. The new Adult Learning Centres site can be viewed at https://adultlearningcentres.ca website. Thanks to the City of Owen Sound IT Department for their assistance and expertise.
7.2.13. New Library Program - Art Therapy - Informed Support: This program, launched in August and running until October 1st, is a free adult drop-in counselling activity facilitated by Grey Bruce Art Therapy & Associates (@greybruceartherapy). The sessions are on Thursdays from 10:15-11:30 am. Members of the public can connect with others through gentle guided art activities intended to support stress management, personal growth, and more.
7.2.14. Dolly Parton Imagination Library: The library has been meeting with members of the Kiwanis Club of Owen Sound and representatives from other local agencies to bring the Dolly Parton Imagination Library to our community. Kiwanis clubs are championing the initiative in Southwestern Ontario. Sault Ste. Marie began participating in 2024. We cannot match the value for dollar that the program achieves. A portion of the "in lieu of interest" grant that we receive from the

Community Foundation Grey Bruce could support this initiative. We would promote our library to local families with young children.
https://imaginationlibrary.com/spreading-dollys-dream-how-angelo-ciardella-and-kiwanis-are-growing-the-imagination-library-across-southwestern-ontario/

28-26 Moved by Frank Emptage THAT the Library Board approve the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library partnering with the Kiwanis Club of Owen Sound in their Dolly Parton Imagination Library initiative and further,
THAT we contribute $3,000 from our 2026 Community Foundation Grey Bruce grant. Carried.

7.2.15. OPEN Team - Pollinator Habitat Update: Our pollinator habitat projects continue. More work has been completed at the Billy Bishop Museum and at the Community Waterfront Heritage Centre. We hope to start similar work on the library grounds in the coming weeks.
7.2.16. Nature Nook & Garden Gnomes Project: We have been approved for two years of LIVGREEN funding ($5,000 per year) to support gardening-based initiatives with a focus on youth and connecting with our local indigenous community. This initiative is funded by the Government of Canada in partnership with the Jane Goodall Institute of Canada. Congratulations to Nadia for the vision and commitment in developing this project.
In the first year, we will be transforming a corner of the library's Youth Services Department into a Nature Nook to encourage families to engage with nature and learn more about the natural world around them through hands on activities, workshops and book-based resources. In the second year we will be expanding the program outside of the library and building raised garden beds in an underutilized portion of the library's garden. We will work with children and teen volunteers to germinate, plant and raise vegetable crops, growing food that could be donated to a local organization.
7.2.17. OSNGUPL 3rd Annual Local Author Book Fair – October 23rd & 24th: We are excited that more than 40 local authors will be in attendance during the two-day event. The fair takes place on all levels of the Owen Sound & North Grey Union Public Library. The Local Author Book Fair showcases a wide range of genres and gives the public a chance to get to know the authors, purchase their books and enter to win some prizes. Everyone is encouraged to come out and meet with authors who write poetry, fiction, non-fiction, young adult, and children's books. It is wonderful to be able to honour our former Chief Librarian Andrew Armitage by celebrating local writers and their work. Special thanks to Shauna Doyle, Information Services Specialist for making this amazing event happen! More information about the participating authors can be found at https://osngupl.ca/osngupl-local-author-book-fair/.
The 2026 brochure is available at https://osngupl.ca/wp-content/uploads/2026/09/Meet-the-Authors.pdf

7.2.18. Community Volunteer Fair: The Library is pleased to partner with the Owen Sound & Area Association of Volunteer Administrators (OSAAVA). They are hosting a free volunteer fair here on Wednesday, October 28th from 3 to 6 pm. Community members can connect with over 20 local organizations and learn about volunteer opportunities.

7.2.19. Trick or Treat Trail: The Library will be participating in the River District Trick-or-Treat Trail this year. On Saturday, October 31 from 10 am until 1 pm, families will be able to stop at the library when they are making their way through the River District in search of treats. We are planning to show Halloween related shows in the Auditorium at the same time, using streaming media from Kanopy with public performance rights.

7.2.20. Library Newsletter and Upcoming Programs: Check out the many programs, services and resources featured in our newsletter, https://www.osngupl.ca/news- programs/library-news/. For a comprehensive schedule and information about upcoming programs, please visit https://owensound.libcal.com/calendar.

7.2.21. Final Comments:

"I would like to say Thank you to this library. You are very progressive and have staff and leadership that do want the best for Owen Sound and also being open to new ideas and what goes on in OS." - patron comment

The summer was very busy. I extend sincere thanks to all our library staff for their dedication and professionalism that they demonstrate every day, delivering so many programs and resources. Their goodwill and exemplary customer service helped us successfully promote the library and meet the information, education, employment and entertainment needs of our community. We are excited about the fall and look forward to your visit.

Additional items:
None

29-26 Moved by Frank Emptage THAT the Library Board approve the CEO's Report as presented. Carried.

7.3 Financial Committee Report

7.3.1 Statements and Accounts:

30-26 Moved by Elizabeth Thompson THAT the Library's and Adult Learning Centre's Financial Statements to August 31, 2026 be received as information. Carried.

7.3.2 Reserve Account:

31-26 Moved by Elizabeth Thompson THAT the Library Board create a LIVGREEN Reserve account and further,
THAT the Library Board approve the transfer of the grant of $5,000 to the LIVGREEN Reserve fund. Carried.

7.4 Personnel Committee Report
No report.

7.5 Property/Building Committee Report
No report.

7.6 Library Foundation Committee Report
No report.

7.7 Policies and Bylaws Committee Report
No report.

7.8 Ontario Library Service Board Assembly Report
No report.

7.9 Poet Laureate/Words Aloud Committee Report
No report.

8 OTHER BUSINESS

8.1 Library's Joint Health & Safety Committee
Nicholls Harrison updated members on the recent review of the City of Owen Sound's occupational health and safety committee structure. The City approved a revised committee structure, resulting in the Library establishing it's own Joint Health & Safety Committee, effective immediately.

9 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES
None

10 RESOLUTION TO MOVE TO CLOSED SESSION – STRUCK

11 DECLARATION TO MOVE TO THE REGULAR BOARD MEETING – STRUCK

12 NEXT MEETING: The next Regular Board meeting to be held Thursday October 29, 2026 at 6:00 p.m. in the Library Auditorium.

13 ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was declared adjourned at 7:01 p.m.

Chair

Secretary