fort erie PUBLIC LIBRARY

APPROVED

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
CENTENNIAL BRANCH BOARDROOM
MINUTES
March 17, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT	BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT
Larry Graber, Chair	Joan Christensen
Andrew Caird	Tricia-Lynn Pascia
Barb Ruegg	
Daniel Turner	
Maria Brigantino	
Stan Sauer	
STAFF PRESENT	**DELEGATIONS**
Jen Kendall, CEO	
Carley Binder, Business Administrator	

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was brought to order by the Chair at approximately 4:30 p.m.

2. LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Chair acknowledged that the land on which we gather is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe. This territory is covered by the Upper Canada Treaties and is within the lands protected by the "Dish With One Spoon" wampum agreement. This gathering place is home to many First Nations, Metis and Inuit peoples who continue to live here. This acknowledgement reminds us that our great standard of living is directly related to the resources and friendship of Indigenous people.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

3.1 Approval of Agenda

26-020 **Moved by: Daniel Turner**
Seconded by: Barbara Ruegg

That the Agenda of the March 17, 2026, Board Meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

5. DELEGATIONS

None.

CARRIED

6. CONSENT AGENDA

6.1 Approval of Minutes Regular Board Meeting January 20, 2026

26-021 Moved by: Maria Brigantino
Seconded by: Andrew Caird

That the Consent Agenda items 6.1, 6.2, 6.3 and 6.4 of the March 17, 2026, Regular Board Meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED

7. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 Report # 26-015 CEO Monthly Activity Report

26-022 Moved by: Daniel Turner
Seconded by: Stan Sauer

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board adopt the Chief Executive Officer's Board Communication Activity Report #26-015.

CARRIED

A copy of the CEO Activity Report for March 2025 was circulated to Board Members for information. There was no business arising from the Report.

Highlights from the report

Library visits reached 15,128 in 2026 so far, reflecting a 7% increase over last year, with a strong program attendance rebounding in February.
Programming saw high engagement in the Children's and Teen programs, with plans to address registration inefficiencies, reduce no shows and expand successful offerings.
While January's attendance was slightly tempered by inclement weather and logistical hurdles, February saw a robust rebound with 827 participants. High engagement skills programs like Sewing 101 and Woodworking were a huge success. Many individual programs performed especially well, including the Valentine's Day events, Taylor Swift Party and the Tangled Lanterns workshop.
With Adult Programs we continue to assess to ensure we are focusing on well-received programs. Attendance patterns inform our adjustments, with staff focusing on re-marketing efforts, particularly around tech help and awareness of the seed library, as well as planning for upcoming sessions like the seed library relaunch and future master gardener programming.
Outreach efforts were more successful in recent months, with visits to Gilmore Lodge, Strong Fort Erie Neighbourhoods, and Crescent Park Lodge resulting in meaningful interactions, new patrons, library card registrations, resource training, and discussions about future programming opportunities.

Collection activity stayed strong, with 247 new prints added and major weeding progress at Centennial and Crystal Ridge. Circulation remained steady, and digital services continued to perform reliably. Staff focused on outreach and program preparation, collaborating across departments on national reading campaigns, creating promotional materials, and improving advisory tools like a new Novelist page. They also maintained community partnerships, supporting schools and programs through shared resources.

8. NEW BUSINESS

8.1 Report #26-016 Mission and Vision

26-023 **Moved by: Barbara Ruegg**
Seconded by: Daniel Turner

The Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the updated Mission and Vision Statements as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO updated the Mission and Vision Statements as reviewed by the board during the Strategic Planning sessions in February 2026.

Mission Statement
Create learning and leisure experiences that engage, enrich, and empower our community members.

Vision Statement
To be the trusted heart of the community. A safe haven where curiosity thrives and everyone feels welcome.

8.2 Report # 26-017 2025 Annual Report - Draft

26-024 Moved by: Andrew Caird
Seconded by: Daniel Turner

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board to approve Report #26-017 as information.

CARRIED

This report outlines our standout year in 2025, where we had a 34% rise in program participation and a 234% surge in youth-focused events, while physical circulation grew 28%. Digital usage remained strong, accounting for three-quarters of online activity, and strategic facility upgrades enhanced sustainability and patron comfort. Key emerging themes point to expanding technology and digital literacy services, scaling skill-building programs such as STEAM and financial literacy workshops, deepening community partnerships, and continuing sustainability initiatives.

9. BUSINESS ARISING

9.1 Report #26-018 Strategic Plan Goals

26-025 Moved by: Daniel Turner
Seconded by: Barbara Ruegg

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the priority areas and goals for the 2026 – 2030 Strategic Plan as outlined in Report #26-018.

CARRIED

In February 2026, the Board met to develop priority areas and goals for the 2026-2030 Strategic Plan. The goals are a result of the discussion and designed to advance the library in the strategic areas with existing staff when feasible. The approved goals will be used in internal documentation to inform staff development and operational decisions.

10. POLICY AND BY LAWS

10.1 Report # 26-019 Accident and Injury Reporting

26-026 Moved by: Barbara Ruegg
Seconded by: Andrew Caird

The Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Accident and Injury Reporting Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO has updated and simplified the language while retaining the structure and added the necessary sections to keep this in line with our other policies.

10.2 Report # 26-020 Interlibrary Loan Policies

26-027 Moved by: Daniel Turner
Seconded by: Maria Brigantino

The Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Interlibrary loan policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO updated the policy after consulting with the staff that handle ILLOs and made some tweaks based on their recommendations.

10.3 Report # 26-021 Corporate Sponsorship Agreements

26-028 Moved by: Daniel Turner
Seconded by: Andrew Caird

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Corporate Sponsorship Agreements policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO made a few tweaks to the existing policy but mostly updated the structure.

10.4 Report # 26-022 Disposal of Surplus Goods

26-029 Moved by: Daniel Turner
Seconded by: Andrew Caird

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Disposal of Surplus Goods Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO updated the policy's structure and clarified language.

10.5 Report # 26-023 NEW - Proctoring

26-030 Moved by: Barbara Ruegg
Seconded by: Daniel Turner

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board adopt the Proctoring Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO created a Proctoring Policy as we have had increased requests for Proctoring. We currently do not have a Policy in place for invigilated proctoring. This will give library staff the clarity of the terms, conditions and procedures for providing proctoring services.

10.6 Report # 26-024 Mission Statement

26-031 Moved by: Andrew Caird
Seconded by: Daniel Turner

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the revised Mission Statement Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO updated the statement and cleaned up the supporting language based on conversations during the strategic planning process.

11. ENQUIRIES BY MEMBERS

- A member enquired about our Library of Things and if we had a sewing machine. The library does have them to borrow.
- A member talked about the preliminary discussions with the Town of Fort Erie investing funds with Niagara Transit to re-introduce a bus route to Fort Erie and requested that the CEO follow up with the Mayor and our Town Council's library representative to pursue that the 3 library branches be apart of the route.

12. MEETINGS

12.1 Regular Meeting of the Board **Tuesday, April 21, 2026**
4:30 p.m. Centennial Branch

13. ADJOURNMENT

As there was no further business, the Chair of the Board declared the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:22p.m.

The undersigned have reviewed the Minutes of the March 17, 2026, Regular Board Meeting.

Original Signed by:

Larry Graber, Chair

Jen Kendall, CEO