fort erie PUBLIC LIBRARY

APPROVED

REGULAR BOARD MEETING
CENTENNIAL BRANCH BOARDROOM
MINUTES
May 19, 2026

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT	BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT
Larry Graber, Chair	Joan Christensen
Andrew Caird	
Barb Ruegg	
Daniel Turner	
Maria Brigantino	
Stan Sauer	
Tricia-Lynn Pascia	
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 4:31p.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

26-047 **Moved by: Tricia-Lynn Pascia**
Seconded by: Daniel Turner

That the Agenda of the May 19, 2026, Board Meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED

4. DECLARATION OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST

None.

5. DELEGATIONS

None.

6. CONSENT AGENDA

6.1 Approval of Minutes Regular Board Meeting April 21, 2026

26-048 Moved by: Maria Brigantino
Seconded by: Daniel Turner

That the Consent Agenda items 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 of the May 19, 2026, Regular Board Meeting be approved as presented.

CARRIED

7. BOARD COMMUNICATIONS

7.1 Report #26-038 CEO Monthly Activity Report

26-049 Moved by: Daniel Turner
Seconded by: Tricia-Lynn Pascia

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board adopt the Chief Executive Officer's Board Communication Activity Report #26-038.

CARRIED

A copy of the CEO Activity Report for May 2026 was circulated to Board Members for information. There was no business arising from the Report.

Highlights from the report:

The CEO has joined the Accessibility Committee at the Town as an ex officio member. This will allow us to gain insight into our own accessibility plan, as well as stay informed about initiatives in the community.

The CEO successfully applied for a $39,000 grant from the Niagara Community Foundation to establish a dedicated Teen Innovation Hub, a project necessitated by the surge in youth engagement over the last 18 months. This funding allows us to move beyond a passive space to a purpose-built area that accommodates high-impact, teen-led programming like the popular Business Incubator and Girls in Trades sessions.

Patron visits slightly increased from March to April thanks largely to a 15% increase at Crystal Ridge for the Friend's Book Sale.

April operations showed steady demand across our branches, with staff continuing to focus on smoother workflows and consistent service. Behind the scenes, materials moved steadily between locations, 349 items were transferred in total, with Centennial accounting for most outbound movement (194 items, 56%) and Crystal Ridge receiving the majority of inbound items (183 items, 53%). In-branch use of technology stayed high: printing and copying was our most popular service, led by Crystal Ridge (52%), followed closely by Centennial (46%), with Stevensville at 2%. On the operational side, recent process changes are helping reduce check-in errors (7 incomplete transits compared with 40+ in prior months).

In April, library programming and outreach continued to grow, with more than 1,472 program participants to date, with adults being the majority of attendees for the first time in recent months. This attendance number exceeds last April's 1,367 and meets the monthly participation goals set by the CEO. The offerings in April included fewer one-off events as part of our efforts to focus staff efforts on well attended programs. This allowed staff to accommodate increased class visits and advance planning for TD Summer Reading. Staff are also using class visits to promote TDSRC. Adult programming and engagement efforts continued to provide a mix of creative, educational, and support-based offerings across branches. Tax Clinics remained a major community impact service, with 340 community members assisted as of April 27.

As part of a larger Town of Fort Erie infrastructure improvement project, the Library has been designated for internet infrastructure upgrades and improvements. These improvements will affect all 3 branches of the Library and will ensure we have access to fast, reliable and secure connectivity now and well into the future.

8. BUSINESS Arising

8.1 Report #26-039 Job Descriptions

26-050 Moved by: Barb Ruegg
Seconded by: Andrew Caird

The Fort Erie Public Library Board to rescind two inactive legacy job descriptions: Public Services Clerk I (Full Time) and Library Maintenance Assistant (Part Time).

CARRIED

The CEO recommends rescinding two job descriptions. They are no longer active, staffed, or part of the bargaining unit.

9. NEW BUSINESS

9.1 Report #26-040 Staff Training Day

26-051 Moved by: Tricia-Lynn Pascia
Seconded by: Stan Sauer

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the closure of all branches for staff training day on Friday, October 23, 2026.

CARRIED

The CEO recommends a full-day training session be scheduled for Oct. 23, 2026, to strengthen internal communication and support consistent, high-quality service across all branches.

9.2 Report #26-041 Policy Manual Update

26-052 Moved by: Daniel Turner
Seconded by: Andrew Caird

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approves editorial, non-substantive updates to the Fort Erie Public Library Board Policy Manual to replace references to “Board members” with “Trustees”; and replace references to “Board” with “Board of Trustees” where applicable and contextually accurate; Replace “Chairman” with “Chair” and; authorize the CEO or designate to make these editorial changes throughout the Policy Manual, provided that no change alters the intent, authority, or meaning of any policy.

CARRIED

The CEO recommended that the Policy Manuals be updated to maintain consistency with internal communications and the Libraries Act.

9.3 Report #26-042 Strategic Plan Briefing

26-053 **Moved by: Maria Brigantino**
Seconded by: Andrew Caird

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board accept the Strategic Plan briefing document as presented.

CARRIED

This briefing document translates the Fort Erie Public Library's 2026 – 2030 strategic plan into a clear, externally focused narrative that can be shared with community partners, funders, schools, service organizations, businesses, and other stakeholders.

10. POLICY AND BY LAWS

10.1 Report #26-043 Notice of Motion: Bylaw 1.1.4

26-054 Proposed Amendment to Board By-law – Qualifications for Appointment (Employment Restriction).

TAKE NOTICE that at the June 16, 2026 meeting of the Fort Erie Public Library Board (the "Board"), I, Laurentius Graber, intend to move, or cause to be moved, the following motion:

Motion:
THAT the Board approve an amendment to the Board's by-law respecting qualifications for appointment as a member of the Board by removing the restriction that a person is disqualified if they are employed by the Regional Municipality of Niagara; and

THAT the by-law, as amended, be presented for approval at the June 16, 2026 meeting and take effect immediately.

Dated: May 19, 2026

Laurentius Graber
Board Chair
Fort Erie Public Library Board

10.2 Report #26-044 Non-Resident Membership Fees Policy

26-055 Moved by:
Seconded by:

The Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Non-Resident Membership Fees Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO recommended adding a 12-month membership tier at the price of $50.00.

10.3 Report #26-045 Expressions of Sympathy Policy

26-056 Moved by:
Seconded by:

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Expressions of Sympathy policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO changed the format and structure.

10.4 Report #26-046 Reader's Advisory Policy

26-057 Moved by:
Seconded by:

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Reference and Reader's Advisory Service Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO revised the Reference and Reader's Advisory Service Policy to recognize and modernize it into a clearer, more accessible format.

10.5 Report #26-047 System-Wide Emergency Closures

26-058 Moved by:
Seconded by:

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Emergency Closing Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO updated the format for consistency.

10.6 Report #26-048 Privacy and Protection of Personal Information

26-059 Moved by:
Seconded by:

That the Fort Erie Public Library Board approve the Privacy and Protection of Personal Information Policy as presented.

CARRIED

The CEO updated the policy to modernize its language, structure, and to clarify how FEPL manages personal information across the organization.

11. ENQUIRIES BY MEMBERS

- Several trustees attended the volunteer appreciation for our youth and teens. It was appreciated by the volunteers to have board trustees attend and recommended others to attend in the future.
- a request was made to have the letter from the financial audit circulated to all the trustees.
- an enquiry was made for the library to have a petition. The petition in question is not permitted in the library, per policy 7.3.10 Petitions in the Library. Several other suggestions were given.

12. MEETINGS

13.1 Regular Meeting of the Board **Tuesday, June 16, 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 5:20 p.m.

The undersigned have reviewed the Minutes of the May 19, 2026, Regular Board Meeting.

Original Signed by:

Larry Graber, Chair

Jen Kendall, CEO