



## **Essex County Library Board Regular Meeting Minutes**

(also available at [www.essexcountylibrary.ca](http://www.essexcountylibrary.ca) under About the Library)

**Wednesday, February 28, 2024**

**Room C, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
360 Fairview Avenue West  
Essex, Ontario N8M 1Y6**

### **Mission**

Essex County Library welcomes you to a world of discovery, creativity and lifelong learning through accessible resources, programs, and innovative services.

### **Vision**

ECL strives to welcome a diverse community to a warm and inviting space where:

- Knowledgeable staff are sensitive to the needs and aspirations of the community
- Innovative ideas and cutting-edge technology are embraced
- Engaging programs and current comprehensive collections are created
- Creative partnerships encourage social interaction and cultural vitality

### **Members:**

Joe Bachetti, Chair  
Tracey Bailey  
Sherry Bondy, Vice Chair  
Terry Burns  
Chris Gibb  
Heather Latam  
Lauren Segedin

### **Administration:**

Adam Craig, Chief Librarian/C.E.O.  
Manuela Denes, Manager, Community Services  
Natalie Hatch, Manager, Support Services

## 6:00 PM Regular Meeting

### 1. Land Acknowledgement

We begin by acknowledging that the land on which the County of Essex is located is the traditional territory of the Three Fires Confederacy of First Nations, comprised of the Ojibway, Odawa, and Potawatomie Peoples.

We specifically recognize Caldwell First Nation and other First Nations which have provided historical and contemporary contributions to this region.

We also value the contributions of all Original Peoples of Turtle Island, who have been living and working on this land from time immemorial.

### 2. Recording of Attendance

Members of the Board attended the meeting in Room C of the Civic Centre.

Mr. Burns was not in attendance.

### 3. Approval of the Agenda

**24/10**

Moved by Mr. Gibb

Seconded by Ms. Bailey

**That** the Agenda be accepted as distributed.

**Carried**

### 4. Adoption of Regular Meeting Minutes

**24/11**

Moved by Ms. Segedin

Seconded by Ms. Latam

**That** the minutes of the January 31, 2024 Regular Meeting of Essex County Library Board be adopted as presented.

**Carried**

## **5. Delegations and Presentations**

### Proposed Changes to Woodslee Branch

Patron Wayne Currie addressed the Board, on behalf of the Woodslee community, regarding the community's concern around the proposed hours of operation for the Woodslee branch.

The concerns included:

1. The schedule of extra-curricular activities for the community has been determined based off the Woodslee branch hours for 20 years. The proposed hours of operation would infringe on the activity schedule for Monday nights and negatively impact patrons who utilize the branch during those activities.
2. The current hours of operation have been in place for the past 20 years and have become routine for Woodslee patrons. The proposed hours will result in access for 3 days per week, as opposed to 5 days currently.
3. The proposed hours of operation were pre-determined by Essex County Library Administration without requesting any input from the community.

Mr. Currie requested that the Board take the community's concerns into consideration and reject the proposed hours of operation, as presented by Administration.

Patron Lise Anhorn also addressed the Board regarding her concerns as they relate to the proposed hours of operation for the Woodslee branch. Lise spoke about the negative impacts the proposed hours will have on the community and advocated for the hours to remain the same.

Ms. Bailey requested that the Board advance to agenda item 6 c) Hours of Operation Report – Amended.

**24/12**

Moved by Ms. Bailey  
Seconded by Ms. Bondy

**That** Wayne Currie be permitted to address the Board.

**Carried**

**24/13**

Moved by Ms. Bailey  
Seconded by Ms. Latam

**That** the Board advance to agenda item 6 c) Hours of Operation  
Report-Amended.

**Carried**

## **6. Consent Agenda**

### **A) Chief Executive Officer's Report**

Administration has recently completed and are prepared to submit the annual "Typical Week Survey". This survey is required by the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. It provides an overview of library usage in a typical week. Highlights of this survey include a 26% increase in library visits by the public; a 16% increase in digital circulation; 194% increase in public computer sessions. The survey results will be submitted to the Ministry in April and will be released to the public in 3-4 weeks following.

Upgrades to the Essex County Library server infrastructure have begun. Additionally, work is underway on the migration of a new cloud-based phone system for the organization.

The renovation project for the Tecumseh branch continues to progress. Furniture has begun to be delivered and assembled and security hardware will soon be installed. Timelines for moving in and reopening will be determined within the next month, looking at late May right now. Administration will be organizing a grand re-opening.

Significant changes will be made to the shelving layout at the Lakeshore Toldo Branch. The current layout presents a challenge for staff as it relates to sightlines. In the upcoming month, 90% of the shelving will be moved and adjusted to allow for a greater level of visibility.

Statistics relating to branch program attendance and circulation were presented to the Board for information.

**24/14**

Moved by Ms. Bondy  
Seconded by Mr. Gibb

**That** the Board receive the consent items: Chief Executive Officer's report for information.

**Carried**

## **7. Reports**

### **A) Programming and Outreach Report**

Manuela Denes, Manager, Community Services, provided a verbal report.

Over the last 5 years, the number of programs run by the Library has increased. However, the attendance at the programs increased significantly; 194% increase. In 2022, the Library had just restarted in-person programming. By 2023, attendance numbers increased; new partnerships were developed; and staff began attending a variety of community events.

From a programming and outreach standpoint, challenges in 2023 included staffing levels and marketing costs. Our current staffing levels do not allow for greater opportunity for staff to get out of the branch and into the community as it would negatively impact branch services. The biggest marketing expense in 2023 was radio ads. Administration is investigating a few complimentary advertisement opportunities to concur with the radio ads in 2024.

2023 experienced a great deal of success for programming and outreach. The Adam Shoalts author event, which accounted for the highest participation for an adult program in the history of Essex County Library. The Dan MacDonald book club was hosted at 5 of our branches. Truck or Treat, hosted by the Town of LaSalle, invited Essex County Library to participate as a vendor; connecting with over 3,000 adults, teens, and children. Finally, MIKE the Bike made its debut in October and will return this spring.

2024 programming is off to a great start with exciting initiatives coming soon such as cognitive care kits and environmental programs.

**24/15**

Moved by Ms. Segedin  
Seconded by Mr. Gibb

**That** the Board receive the Programming and Outreach Report for information.

**Carried**

**B) Strategic Plan Update**

Adam Craig, Chief Librarian/CEO, provided a verbal report.

A working group was put together with the Chair, Vice Chair, members of management and staff. The process began on June 14 with the first session. This session included a basic overview of the process, expectations, and high-level concepts as well as a review of the organization's mission, vision, and values statements.

On November 29, 2023, the facilitator delivered a session to the Board in the form of a focus group. This provided the Board with an opportunity to discuss action items and concerns regarding the community needs survey that was provided to the public in the fall.

On February 1, 2024, the working group met with the intention of completing a SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) analysis. This meeting also included discussion around workshops and a revised mission statement.

**24/16**

Moved by Mr. Gibb

Seconded by Ms. Segedin

**That** the Board receive the Strategic Plan Update report.

**Carried**

**C) Hours of Operation Report – Amended**

Adam Craig, Chief Librarian/CEO provided a verbal report.

In 2023, Administration identified several concerns regarding the current staffing model. The biggest concerns included the fact that the current model involves small branches being staffed by 1 full-time person who are required to drive between branches every day. As well as there was a demand for extended hours at the Harrow branch. Included in the 2024 budget was the approval of a full-time position with the intent to be utilized for the increased hours at the Harrow branch. With these two factors being taken into consideration, Administration has developed a new staffing model that is driving these hours of operation.

While developing the hours of operation for Woodslee, Administration was aware of the community activities that would be affected. However, it was determined that the future staffing model would not be able to accommodate all the activities at the Woodslee branch due to long-standing practices. The proposed hours of operation were developed in a way to meet the operational needs and to stay within our staffing ability.

It was noted that the proposed hours of operation do not result in the Woodslee branch hours being reduced. The hours of operation for Woodslee are being adjusted to fit within the Library's staffing model.

It was brought to the Board's attention that the deferral and/or rejection of this report will have negative implications Administratively as action has already taken place from a staffing standpoint.

The Board requested that Administration consider concerns brought forward by the Woodslee community and the Board by rectifying the Hours of Operation by allowing the Woodslee hours of operation to remain status quo.

**24/17**

Moved by Ms. Bailey



Seconded by Ms. Bondy

**That** the Board receive the Hours of Operation -Amended Report for information; and, defer until the March 27, 2024 meeting.

**Carried**

#### **D) Governance Report**

Adam Craig, Chief Librarian/CEO provided a verbal report.

The Procedural By-Law for Meetings, CEO Linkage Policy, and Rules and Responsibilities for the Essex County Library Board policy were presented to the Board for review and approval.

The Board requested that Article 6.5 c) and 6.6 be removed from the Procedural By-Law for Meetings.

**24/18**

Moved by Ms. Bailey

Seconded by Ms. Latam

**That** the Board receive the Procedural By-Law for Meetings for information; and, approve with the removal of Article 6.5 c) and 6.6.

**Carried**

**24/19**

Moved by Mr. Gibb

Seconded by Ms. Latam

**That** the Board receive CEO Linkage Policy, and Rules and Responsibilities Policy for information; and, approve as presented.

**Carried**

### **8. New Business**

#### **A) Motion**

There were no motions.

**B) Notice of Motion**

There was no notice of motion.

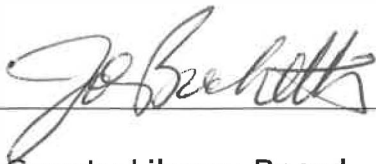
**9. Date and Location of Next Meeting**

Date: To Be Determined.

Location: Room C, Civic Centre

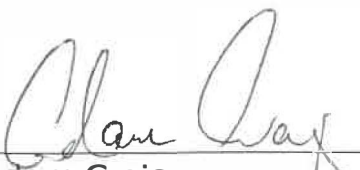
**10. Adjournment**

Upon motion of Ms. Segedin and Mr. Gibb, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:17 PM.



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Joe Bachetti  
Chair – Essex County Library Board



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Adam Craig  
CEO/Chief Librarian, Essex County Library  
Secretary and Treasurer to the Board