INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
MEETING AGENDA
Monday, June 19, 2023 – 7:00 p.m.
Lakeshore Library – Community Room

1. Call to Order
   - Land Acknowledgement Statement

2. Approval of Agenda   (copy & motion)

   [Motion #2023. – THAT the agenda of the June 19, 2023 meeting be approved as presented.]

3. Declaration of Interest
   None at time of agenda creation

4. Delegations to the Board
   a) Intellectual Freedom and Our Library - Leadership Team

5. Consent Agenda   (motion)

   a) Approval of Previous Minutes   (copy)
      Recommendation
      THAT the May 15, 2023 Special Board Meeting Closed Session Minutes and the May 15, 2023 Board Meeting Minutes be approved as presented.

   b) Correspondence   (copy)
      Recommendation
      THAT Correspondence Items 5b.01.01 to 5b.07.01 for June 19, 2023 be received.

   c) CEO Reports   (copy)
      Recommendation
      THAT the CEO Report 5c.01.01 for May 2023 be received.

   Consent Recommendation
   [Motion #2023. – THAT the consent agenda items 5 a) to 5 c), and the recommendations contained therein be approved as presented.]

6. Business Arising
   a) Donation Reserves

   [Motion #2023.   THAT the Board delegates the CEO to approve purchases from the Donation Reserve up to a limit of $10,000 and will report on these expenses in the following monthly CEO Report. Expenses greater than $10,000 will require Board approval.]

7. Reports
   a) Municipal Council Report   (copy & information sharing)

   b) Library Board Report   (information sharing)

   c) Board Committee Reports

   - Fundraising Committee   (information sharing & motion)

   d) Health & Safety Update   (copy & motion)

   [Motion #2023.   THAT the minutes of the JHSC May 18, 2023 meeting be received.]

   e) Trends Report

   [Motion #2023.   THAT the Staff Report –LIB-06-2023 Library Trends be received as presented.]

8. Policy
   a) *ACCESSIBILITY –* Integrated Access Standards Policy #A-2023-14
                                                                (copy & motion)
   [Motion #2023. THAT the ACCESSIBILITY – Integrated Access Standards Policy #A-2023-14 be approved as presented.]

   b) *EMPLOYMENT –* Social Media Policy #E-2023-15
                                                                (copy & motion)
   [Motion #2023. THAT the EMPLOYMENT – Social Media Policy #E-2023-15 be approved as presented.]

   c) *EMPLOYMENT –* Hours of Work and Overtime Policy #E-2023-16
                                                                (copy & motion)
   [Motion #2023. THAT the EMPLOYMENT – Hours of Work and Overtime Policy #E-2023-16 be approved as presented.]

d)   ***EMPLOYMENT –*** Working Alone Policy #E-2023-17

<div align="right">(copy & motion)</div>

[Motion #2023. THAT the EMPLOYMENT – Working Alone Policy #E-2023-17 be approved as presented.]

9.   Strategic Issues
     None at time of agenda creation

10. New Business
     None at time of agenda creation

11. Comments and Announcements
     a) Calendar of Events   (link)
     https://innisfil.bibliocommons.com/events/search/index

12. In Camera
     No in camera at time of agenda creation

13. Adjournment

     [Motion #2023. – THAT the meeting be adjourned]

CORRESPONDENCE LIST for June 19, 2023

5b.01.01	*CBC.ca,* May 24, 2023, article entitled *Libraries are Being Accused of Offering Child Porn. Librarians Explain why That's Not True,* written by Nick Logan	(copy)
5b.02.01	*CBC.ca,* May 23, 2023, article entitled *Brandon School Division Rejects Call to Remove Library Books on Sexuality, Gender Identity,* written by Cameron MacLean	(copy)
5b.03.01	*The Uniter,* March 23, 2023, article entitled *City Support For Libraries Is Overdue,* written by Matthew Frank	(copy)
5b.04.01	*The Walrus,* June 12, 2023, article entitled *Have You Been To The Library Lately?,* written by Nicholas Hune-Brown	(copy)
5b.05.01	*The Ottawa Citizen,* June 12, 2023, article entitled *By The Book: Ottawa Public Library Take A Stand on Intellectual Rights, Book Bans and Cancel Culture,* written by Joanne Laucius	(copy)
5b.06.01	*Bradford Today,* June 10, 2023, article entitled *Despite Protesters, Drag Queen Storytime Offers 'A Way to Connect',* written by Michael Owen	(copy)
5b.07.01	*Ilovelibraries,* June 13, 2023, article entitled *Illinois Bans Book Bans,* written by Phil Morehart	(copy)

INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
MEETING MINUTES
Monday, May 15, 2023 – 8:00 p.m.
Lakeshore Library – Community Room

In Attendance:	Rob Nicol, Councillor Jennifer Richardson, Councillor Robert Saunders, Barb Baguley, Sue Bennett, Rhonda Flanagan, Cynthia Gordon, Raj Grover
Staff in Attendance:	Erin Scuccimarri, Jennifer Miyasaki
Regrets:	Anne Smith

1. CALL TO ORDER
- The meeting was called to order at 8:21 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Motion #2023.40
Moved by:	Raj Grover
Seconded by:	Cynthia Gordon

THAT the agenda of the May 15, 2023, meeting be approved as presented.
CARRIED.

3. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST
There were no disclosures of interest.

4. DELEGATIONS TO THE BOARD
No delegations

5. CONSENT AGENDA

Motion #2023.41
Moved by:	Rob Saunders
Seconded by:	Cynthia Gordon

THAT the consent agenda items 5 a) to 5 c), and the recommendations contained therein be approved as presented.
CARRIED.

6. BUSINESS ARISING
a) Truth & Reconciliation Committee
- Membership
  - The CEO advised that at least 2 members are still required to strike this Committee; it was suggested that a former Board member be permitted to join the committee; the Board agreed.

Motion #2023.42
    Moved by: Rhonda Flanagan
    Seconded by: Raj Grover

THAT the Library Board request that Wendy Van Straten, a former Board Member and Truth & Reconciliation Committee Member be appointed to the Truth & Reconciliation Committee.

CARRIED.

b) CEO Evaluation Committee
- Recruitment
- Chair is Ex-Officio
- Barb Baguley and Raj Grover volunteered for the Committee; CEO Evaluation Committee has been established.

7. REPORTS
a) Municipal Council Report
- A report was shared with the package
- No additions in the meeting

b) Library Board Report
- Members did a roundtable; items shared included:
  - Pitch-In Day was well attended
  - Lions club is hosting several events for youth and adults including Bingo, darts, and an open mic night
  - A fundraiser was held at Nantyr Shores to assist in funding the band's trip for a competition
  - Little Free Library at the IRC is in place
  - Chair Smith has been accepted as a trustee on the FOPL Board
  - Annual Report to Council was well received

c) Board Committee Reports
- Finance Committee
  - The Committee met on May 3, 2023 to review the Q1 2023 Operating and Capital Results
  - A summary report and financial reports were shared in the package; an error with a date on the report was noted and will be corrected.

Motion #2023.43
     Moved by: Jennifer Richardson
     Seconded by: Raj Grover

THAT the Finance Committee Report LIB-03-2023 regarding the 2023 Q1 Operating and Capital results, dated May 15, 2023 be received (subject to a correction).

CARRIED.

d) Health & Safety Update

Motion #2023.44
     Moved by: Sue Bennett
     Seconded by: Barb Baguley

THAT the minutes of the JHSC April 20, 2023 meeting be received.

CARRIED.

e) Q1 2023 Collections Report LIB-04-2023

Motion #2023.45
     Moved by: Raj Grover
     Seconded by: Cynthia Gordon

THAT the Q1 2023 Collections Report LIB-04-2023 be received.

CARRIED.

f) Economic & Social Value of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library Report LIB-05-2023

Motion #2023.46
     Moved by: Sue Bennett
     Seconded by: Jennifer Richardson

THAT the Economic & Social Value of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library Report LIB-05-2023 be received.

CARRIED.

8. POLICY

a)   *EMPLOYMENT –* Mileage Policy #E-2023-11

Motion #2023.47
      Moved by: Rob Saunders
      Seconded by: Cynthia Gordon

    THAT the EMPLOYMENT – Mileage Policy #E-2023-11 be approved as presented.

                                                              CARRIED.

b)   *OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY –* Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) Policy #2023-12

Motion #2023.48
      Moved by: Rhonda Flanagan
      Seconded by: Barb Baguley

    THAT the *OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY* – Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) Policy #2023-12 be approved as presented.
                                                            CARRIED.

c)   *OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY –* Rules of Conduct Policy #2023-13

Motion #2023.49
      Moved by: Jennifer Richardson
      Seconded by: Sue Bennett

    THAT the OPERATING & TECHNOLOGY – Rules of Conduct Policy #2023-13 be approved as presented.

                                                              CARRIED.

9. STRATEGIC ISSUES
   There were no Strategic Issues to discuss this month.

10. NEW BUSINESS
   No new business

11. COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCMENTS
a) Calendar of Events
- Link to Library offerings was provided in the agenda.
- Annual Presentation to Council occurred on May 10, 2023
- Board Members are planning to attend upcoming Neighbourhood Nights

12. IN CAMERA
No In Camera

13. ADJOURNMENT
Motion #2023.50
       Moved by: Barb Baguley

THAT the meeting be adjourned at 8:57p.m.

                                             CARRIED.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next Library Board meeting will be held on
Monday, June 19, 2023 at 7:00 p.m.
Innisfil Public Library & ideaLAB – Lakeshore Branch – Community Room

_____   _____
Anne Smith, Board Chair   **Erin Scuccimarri, Secretary**

Canada

Libraries are being accused of offering child porn. Librarians explain why that's not true

Amid the campaigns to remove certain books, librarians explain how they choose their collections

Nick Logan · CBC News · Posted: May 24, 2023 4:00 AM EDT | Last Updated: 5 hours ago
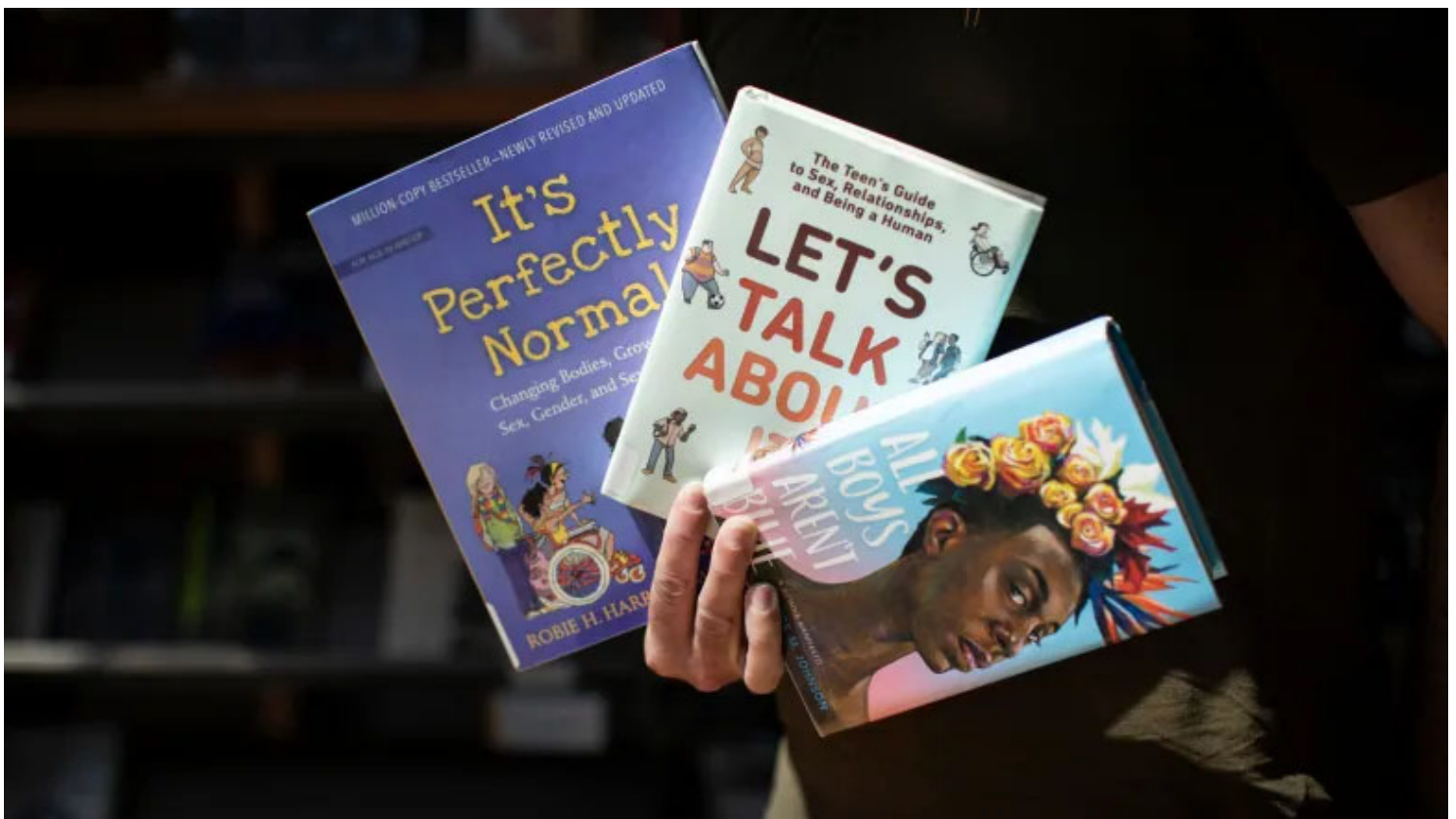
It's Perfectly Normal, Let's Talk About It and All Boys Aren't Blue, pictured at the Vancouver Public Library in Vancouver on May 18, are three of the books that some people have demanded be removed from school or

public libraries. (Ben Nelms/CBC)

Stroll through the stacks of any library and you're bound to find something you don't agree with. But in parts of Canada, people are campaigning to make public and school libraries remove books they claim make sexually explicit material available to minors, or even contain child pornography.

The books in question are often ones aimed at children and teens and that have content related to sexual education and/or LGBTQ and gender identity issues.

The librarians who have been tasked with selecting books and maintaining robust collections say the claim they would stock child pornography on their shelves is not true, and that these efforts seem motivated by personal beliefs.

"We make the information available. We don't force anybody to look at it," said Kay Cahill, the Vancouver Public Library's director of information technology and collections.

- **Cheers as Brandon School Division rejects call to remove library books on sexuality, gender identity**

- **Libraries are in the political crosshairs as they fight back against U.S. book bans**

The efforts to have books pulled from libraries follows similar movements throughout the United States, where there have even been laws enacted to punish libraries and librarians.

In multiple communities in southern Manitoba, individuals have made cases to municipal councils that libraries should have their funding taken away unless certain books are removed. They believe the books violate sections of the Criminal Code of Canada.

In February, RCMP in Chilliwack, B.C., investigated and dismissed an allegation that books in school libraries contained child pornography. And a school board in Ontario's Durham region faced heated questions over the inclusion of a book on gender diversity in high school libraries during a meeting last month.

WATCH | How books are selected at Vancouver Public Libraries:

▶ **How the Vancouver Public Library chooses books for its collection — and why**

5 hours ago | 2:31

As libraries across the country face calls to remove books that contain content related to sexual education and LGBTQ issues, the team responsible for building Vancouver Public Library's collection explains how books are chosen and why there should be something for everyone.

'A line in the sand'

There are around 1.8 million books at Vancouver Public Libraries' (VPL) Central Branch, according to Cahill, who along with Inness Campbell, leads the collection team for that location and 20 others around the city.

It's impossible to read every single book, cover to cover, before putting it on the shelf. But Cahill is adamant that "we don't carry illegal content, you know, that is a line in the sand."

Cahill explained VPL has a team with areas of expertise in various subjects, and they work closely with publishers and vendors, as well as rely on publishers' notes, library journals and media reports, to determine what books they should stock.

Kay Cahill, director of IT and Collections, is pictured at the Vancouver Public Library on May 18. (Ben Nelms/CBC)

The library also looks at "developmental appropriateness" when it selects books for the children's and teens' sections, added Campbell, VPL's Collections and Technical Services Manager.

They also consider the reading level of the age group and whether a topic is "described and talked about appropriately for that age."

When it comes to material related to sexuality and gender identity, Cahill said the library won't restrict access to specific books. While there are dedicated sections for books aimed at teens, any library card holder at any age has access to the full collection.

"If you constrain offering materials around sex-ed because some people perceive it as controversial, you'll have teenagers who are going out looking for information elsewhere, possibly using unreliable sources," Cahill said.

Inness Campbell, manager of Collections, is pictured at the Vancouver Public Library on May 18. (Ben Nelms/CBC)

School libraries 'an easy target'

School libraries are "an easy target" for accusations because they deal solely with young readers, said Anita Brooks Kirkland, the chair of the non-profit organization Canada School Libraries and a retired teacher librarian in Ontario's Waterloo Region District School Board.

"'Age appropriateness' is a common phrase that is used," she told CBC News.

But these charges are usually concerning books with content about sexual identity, gender identity or sexual expression — "not actual pornography," she said.

- **London Public Library refuses to rent space to event featuring author of How Woke Won**

- **Report highlights increased sense of safety for LGBTQ people and spaces under new city bylaw**

Brooks Kirkland said she and other librarians have been cautiously watching the spread of book bans and library restrictions in the United States and that it has brought "a chill into our hearts." She noted several school districts across Canada have already faced challenges.

While larger schools may have a dedicated library staff, in smaller districts the task of choosing books may fall on teachers, known as teacher librarians, volunteers or there may be no one at all, she said. The guidelines for how a collection is built may be different in each province or each district, Brooks Kirkland said, but her organization provides a set of standards that can be used as a guide.

Like public libraries, she said school libraries have the same duty to provide books on an array of topics and with a range of perspectives.

WATCH | People in south central Manitoba call for sex-ed books to pulled from shelves:
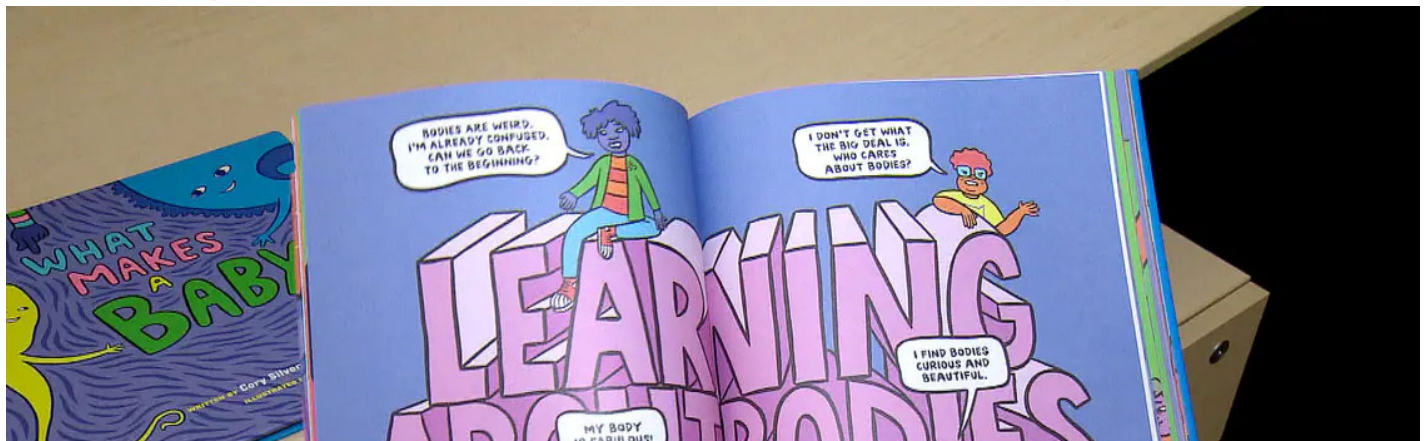
▶ **Battle over sex-ed books in south central Manitoba libraries**

23 days ago | 2:40

It started last fall with three sex-ed books found in public libraries. Now, some people in south central Manitoba are calling for all sex ed books to pulled from the shelves.

Certain books under scrutiny

Earlier this spring, people in south central Manitoba urged municipal councils to reconsider funding for libraries, accusing the South Central Regional Library (SCRL) of "creating an unsafe

environment" by offering access to certain sex-ed and LGBTQ books.

Two of the titles that have come under fire are books about sexuality and gender identity: *Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships and Being a Human* by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan; and *It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing up, Sex, Gender and Sexual Health* by Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley.

It's Perfectly Normal is intended for age 10 and up, while the publisher of *Let's Talk About It* categorizes the book for teens and young adults.

Both books contain illustrations of developing bodies and depictions of sexual activities, including masturbation, as well as chapters on safe sex, pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections, sexual and gender diversity, consent and online safety.

A page from It's Perfectly Normal is pictured at the Vancouver Public Library. (Ben Nelms/CBC)

All Boys Aren't Blue: A Memoir-Manifesto, the personal story of LGBTQ activist and writer George M. Johnson, has also come under scrutiny. The book includes descriptions of sexual

activities.

"Why does council continue to fund the South Central Regional Library, which continues to purchase and distribute materials that contain child pornography and instruct on sexual touching for minors," asked Karin Banman, one of the people making a case to cut library funding at a March 14 city council financial planning meeting in Winkler, Man.

Banman and others cited Section 152 of the Criminal Code of Canada, related to the invitation of sexual touching to a person under 16 years old, and Section 163, which pertains to child pornography and the depictions of people under the age of 18 years old in "photographic, film, video or other visual representation[s]" but excludes materials that have "a legitimate purpose related to the administration of justice or to science, medicine, education or art."

According to the *Winnipeg Free Press*, Winkler Mayor Henry Siemens sent a letter to SCRL, on behalf of council, to raise concerns about "graphic sexual act depictions and descriptions contained in some children's books in the library," but he insisted council was not intending to get involved in library operations.

Illustrations from the book It's Perfectly Normal: Changing Bodies, Growing up, Sex, Gender, and Sexual Health, by author Robie H. Harris and illustrator Michael Emberley, have been criticized for depictions of sexual development and sexual activity. The book, published by Candlewick Press, is available in many libraries but has been subjected to calls for its removal. (Robie H. Harris and Michael Emberley/It's Perfectly Normal)

Personal objections

It's highly unlikely that any book on a library shelf contains content that would be considered child pornography under the Criminal Code of Canada, said Jordan Donich, a criminal lawyer in Toronto.

"The publisher doesn't want to face liability," he said. "So, I think it's safe to assume if it's [in] a bookstore or in a library, it's likely been vetted by lawyers."

He said people have their opinions, but that doesn't mean they should make child pornography accusations and attempt to use the Criminal Code of Canada as a "backdoor" to have content they personally object to be removed from libraries.

LISTEN | How librarians are responding to growing calls to ban books:

▶   **On The Coast**   **8:20**

Books dealing with gender, sex ed, and LGBTQ issues have been the target of bans in some American libraries.and there are now instances of it happening

CBC's Nick Logan speaks with Gloria Macarenko about how librarians are responding to growing calls to ban books that some people don't like.

VPL's Campbell explained it's up to the parent to be a part of making that decision with their child — something that is actually stated on the back of the library card.

"We don't honestly know what's appropriate for that child, in that patron's eyes, but parents, absolutely, we want involved with their children's reading. It builds better readers," she said.

If there's something a parent has questions or concerns about, Campbell and Cahill said librarians are available to discuss why a certain book may be in the library. But they haven't had many issues at this point.

Often, people just want to "feel heard," said Campbell.

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Manitoba

Cheers as Brandon School Division rejects call to remove library books on sexuality, gender identity

Hundreds pack high school gymnasium in response to May 8 delegation

Cameron MacLean · CBC News · Posted: May 23, 2023 10:43 PM EDT | Last Updated: 6 hours ago

An audience member embraces Penni Jones, left, who spoke against banning books at a Brandon School Division board of trustees meeting at Vincent Massey High School on Tuesday, May 23, 2023. (Chelsea Kemp/CBC)

Loud cheers erupted inside a packed high school gymnasium after the Brandon School Division rejected a call to remove books dealing with sexuality and gender identity from libraries.

Hundreds of people in Manitoba's second-largest city showed up for the marathon school division meeting, which ran into the early morning hours.

The trustees ultimately voted 6-1 to reject a proposal to create a committee of trustees and parents to review books available in division schools.

The school division was inundated with calls, letters and emails after a delegation at its May 8 meeting, led by former school trustee and grandmother Lorraine Hackenschmidt, called on the division to set up a committee to review the content of books available in school libraries, and remove titles deemed inappropriate, including "any books that caused our kids to question whether they are in the wrong body."

Before the vote, board chair Linda Ross said there were many "errors and untruths" in Hackenschmidt's presentation.

Ross said that by denying the possibility that people could feel like they are born in the wrong body, "you are denying the reality of others. Because it is not your experience does not mean that it is not the reality of others."

Meeting moved

Tuesday's board of trustees meeting was held in Vincent Massey High School in the southwestern Manitoba city, where it had been relocated to accommodate the number of people expected to attend.

More than 30 people — but not Hackenschmidt herself — registered to speak at the meeting before school trustees voted on the proposal brought forward on May 8.

A large number of people in the audience held up signs supporting LGBTQ people, while others held signs declaring their one-word response to the proposal: "Don't."

Whitney Hodgins attended the meeting to show her opposition to the proposal to a call to review and remove books dealing with issues of sexuality and gender identity. (Cameron MacLean/CBC)

First to speak was Jason Foster, a student at Vincent Massey High School who identified himself as transgender.

Foster started by thanking everyone in attendance, "no matter your opinion, no matter your stance."

He went on to describe his experiences as a transgender youth, saying he has been told to kill himself, and telling the trustees that being trans is not a choice.

"If it were, then people would not choose it," he said. "I have been told that the only way I would make my parents proud is if they found me hanging in my living room because I am transgender."

Jason Foster, who identifies as a transgender male, told the trustees removing the books would harm transgender youth. (Chelsea Kemp/CBC)

Removing the books would harm transgender youth, Foster said.

"If that content is banned and suppressed they will think something is wrong," he said. "Children will hate themselves ... Children are going to die because they believe their existence is wrong."

Hundreds of people attended the meeting in the gymnasium at Vincent Massey High School in Brandon, Man. (Chelsea Kemp/CBC)

Trustees also heard from Penni Jones, who said her son is trans.

"I have always told my children that school is their safe place aside from our home," she said.

"If you, the trustees of the Brandon School Division, decide to form a committee to look at banning books of the LBGTQ nature, school will no longer be a safe place for my son."

- **Grandmother calls on Brandon School Division to remove LGBTQ and sexual education books**

- **Brandon LGBTQ community members fear effects of proposed school books ban**

The first of two delegates to speak in support of Hackenschmidt's call for a committee to review the books was John Roozendaal. He said they are all there because they are invested in the lives of students in the Brandon School Division.

"With that common ground, my most sincere hope is that we would all have the tolerance to allow each other to ask questions about the education they're receiving," he told the trustees.

"Books may be found to be inappropriate. Let them be examined by adults with the best interests of children and the light of day for all to see."
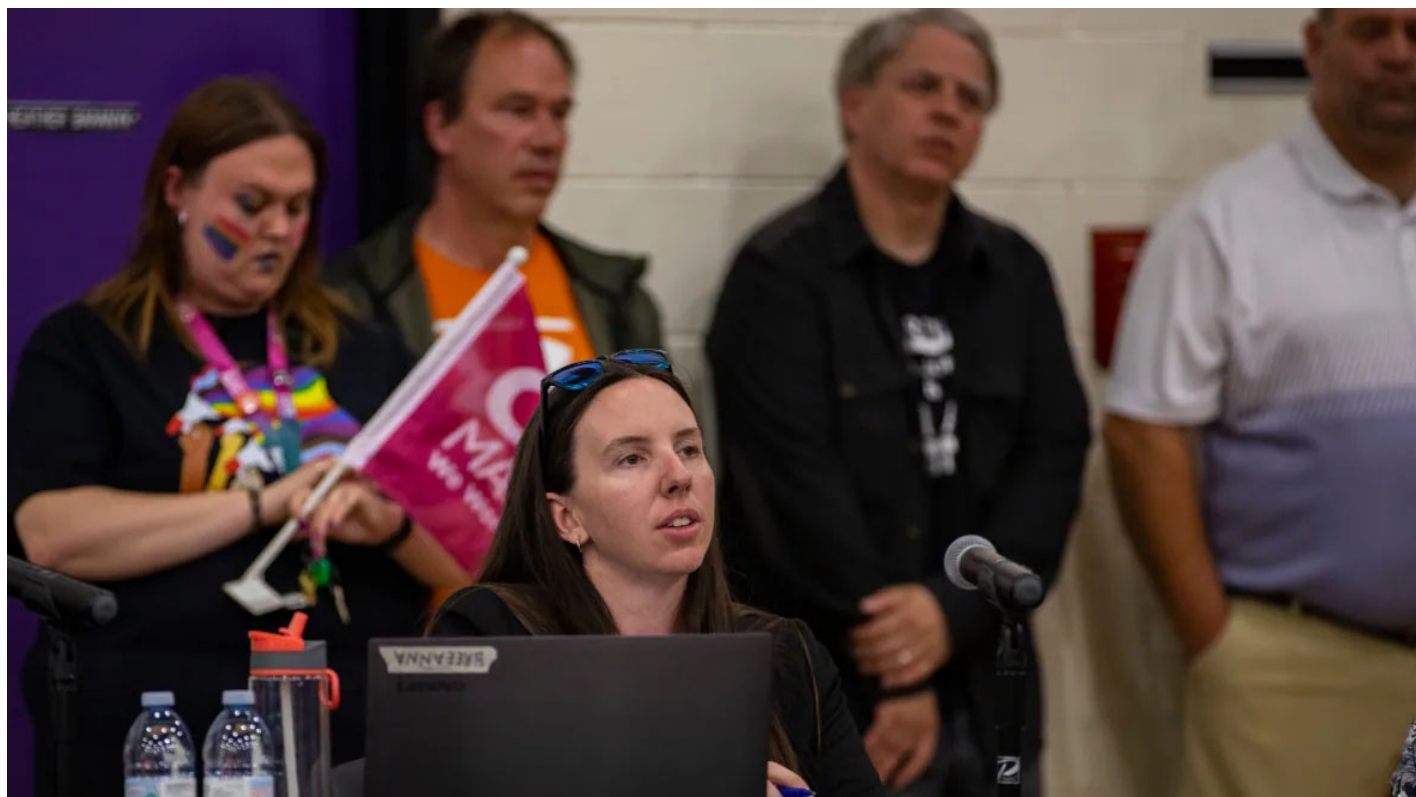
Several speakers at the meeting criticized trustee Breeanna Sieklicki for comments she made at the division's meeting on May 8, when she said it took 'courage' for delegates to come forward calling for a committee to review and remove books in school libraries. (Chelsea Kemp/CBC)

The only trustee to vote in favour of proposal was Breanna Sieklicki, who was criticized by a number of speakers for comments she made at the May 8 meeting, when she told Hackenschmidt it took "courage" to come before the board and raise her concerns.

Loni Powell, the last speaker of the evening, told the board Sieklicki should be removed from her position, which was met with a loud cheer.

Before the vote, Sieklicki said she supported the call to review all books, not only those dealing with LGBTQ issues.

"We need to look at these books because why are we trying to sexualize kids in our schools?" she said.

She stated that she did not think the committee should have the power to remove the books, but she wanted to "get the conversation started."

Books in question

Some titles singled out by the May 8 delegation included *Being Jazz* by Jazz Jennings, an American transgender advocate, and *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie H. Harris, an illustrated book for children 10 and older dealing with puberty and sex.

As of noon last Friday, the division had received at least 289 emails and letters in response to the proposal. Of those, six supported the call to review the books.

Loud cheers and applause frequently punctuated the meeting, from audience members both in support and opposed to the proposal.

Security guards ejected one audience member who supported the proposal to remove books from school libraries after a verbal altercation with other audience members. The man had ripped up a sign held by opponents of the call to remove books, with the word 'Don't' printed on it, and held up the half which read 'Do.' (Chelsea Kemp/CBC)

Several people in the audience cheered when People's Party of Canada Leader Maxime Bernier, who said he supports the call to remove the books, entered the gym. They were met

with jeers and boos from other audience members.

There was little reaction when Bernier quietly left the meeting shortly before 9 p.m.

Security guards ejected one man from the meeting after a verbal argument with other audience members. The man had cut one of the signs with the word "Don't" printed on it, and held up the half which read "Do."

If you or someone you know is struggling, here's where to get help:

- ***Talk Suicide Canada****: 1-833-456-4566 (phone) | 45645 (text between 4 p.m. and midnight ET).*
- *Kids Help Phone: 1-800-668-6868 (phone), live chat counselling on **the website**.*
- *Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention: **Find a 24-hour crisis centre.***
- *Trans Lifeline: 877-330-6366 (phone, 5 p.m.-1 a.m. ET) A peer support line run by and for trans people, focused on providing community, support, and resources.*

This guide from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health outlines how to talk about suicide with someone you're worried about.

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THE UNITER

CITY SUPPORT FOR LIBRARIES IS OVERDUE

Winnipeg is falling behind in funding and staffing its libraries

The Millennium Library, Winnipeg's flagship d
while library funding at large is floundering.

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Matthew Frank   City reporter

MARCH 23, 2023

Libraries are intersections of cultures, knowledge and accessibility within cities. Libraries are much more than places for books. They're sacred spaces and part of community ecosystems.

On a Friday afternoon, Winnipeg's Millennium Library is no different. There's a child reclining in a mint-coloured chair, flipping through a picture book taller than him. A man in a bright, neon-yellow construction vest is charging his phone at a kiosk while sipping from a Tim Hortons coffee cup.

A woman and her father speak with a librarian about how to print a tax form off the computer. An elderly man walks over to a shelf, picks up a Marvel *Daredevil* comic book and relaxes on a bench.

This atmosphere is pierced by the beeping of the metal detector at the entrance and radios attached to the vests of two police officers leaning against a table. The now-closed Community Connections space, which opened in April 2022, sits empty across from the line of people waiting to get inspected and scanned to enter the library space.

USING THE LIBRARY

Nicole Brown has been a dedicated library user for 10 years. She's visited all 20 library branches in Winnipeg, hunting for new graphic novels to check out. Brown enjoys going to the smaller branches because of the more intimate, community feeling they

offer but does occasionally go to the Millennium branch for more resources.

"I go to the Harvey Smith branch the most," she says. "It's quiet, and the staff are really friendly. There's a lot of teenagers hanging out outside and inside the library. There's lots of families coming with children and checking out lots of books, which is good to see."

Brown says libraries provide resources for children in her community who might not otherwise have regular access to books. The lessened amount of programming has impacted the atmosphere of the library, but the staff are still passionate about helping people who come in.

"It's the one last place you can visit where you're not expected to pay," she says. "All of the services are free, and there's no barriers for finances. It's a good space."

For the most part, libraries are free of charge, except for certain printing services and memberships for non-Winnipeg residents.

However, the accessible spaces and resources that the Winnipeg Public Library (WPL) provides are at risk. The City's preliminary operating budget for 2023 includes funding cuts for services and circulation, as well as increased salaries for library staff. The Millennium branch requires patrons to go through airport-style security measures on every visit. Library staff and community advocates are sounding the alarm and pleading for financial support.

The Instagram account @wpglibraryfacts first posted on Feb. 13, less than a week

after the 2023 preliminary budget was announced. Since then, has posted more than 60 times. It's run by a collection of past and present library staff members who created a space for concerned workers to speak anonymously.

One post says, "I asked for a sharps container (for safe disposal of used needles) for my library's public washroom but was told that there was no funding." While the cost of some elaborate sharps containers can exceed $100, many basic varieties cost less than $10.

Another post reads, "We didn't have any money to run an important community program and had to bring in and reuse our own materials from home."

@wpglibraryfacts declined to be interviewed for this article.

UNDERFUNDED AND UNDERSTAFFED

Winnipeg's libraries are underfunded and understaffed when compared to those in other Canadian cities.

According to an analysis provided by the Manitoba Libraries Association, the WPL's 2021 operating budget was spending $36.22 per 100,000 people. This is smaller than the budgets of Regina, Saskatoon, Calgary, Edmonton, Hamilton, Ottawa, Halifax and Victoria. Calgary is the next closest, spending $41.05 per 100,000 people.

Currently, the WPL has 267 full-time employees or equivalent positions. The proposed 2023 budget would cut 11 full-time staffers. The WPL has less library staff

when compared to even smaller cities like Hamilton and Halifax.

Provincial funding for the WPL has been stagnant for 35 years, and the Province has only contributed slightly more than $2 million annually since 1987. Provincial funding accounts for a little more than 6 per cent of the total WPL budget.

Dr. Aaron Moore chairs the political-sciences department at the University of Winnipeg. He says because of Winnipeg's long history of tax freezes, funding has been cut for many services, including libraries.

"If you really want to compare Winnipeg to other jurisdictions, you have to understand that where most other jurisdictions saw their taxes going up, Winnipeg was keeping them flat," he says. "The consequence of that is you have less and less resources."

Moore says politics and department demands are interwoven with the budgeting process. Despite having a budget of more than $1 billion, Winnipeg's operating budget is largely tied up by fixed costs.

"The actual pie of money that's discretionary isn't a huge amount," Moore says. "It will come down to politics and trying to balance the interests and demands of multiple different departments within the city. Sometimes, they're going to prioritize certain costs over others."

For example, the police budget will increase almost 50 times more than the WPL's and includes the addition of 11 fulltime employees.

The WPL is the outlier in Canadian library governance. It's rare for a municipal government to directly control a Canadian library system. The City's community-services department operates the WPL. While the WPL has a board, it only serves in an advisory capacity.

Richard Bee, director of advocacy for the Manitoba Libraries Association, says library boards are typically treated the same as police boards. They set budgets, staffing levels, policies and mission statements for the library with full autonomy.

He says it's important for a library board to remain at arms' length from its municipal government, because it allows the library to fully function as a free and accessible public resource without being caught up in politics.

"WPL having an advisory board allows it to be undercut by city administration," Bee says. "Now you have this added layer of politics and bureaucracy that WPL is having to navigate that no other library system has to deal with."

Coun. John Orlikow, the community-services chair, didn't respond for comment by press time.

THE FIGHT FOR ACCESSIBILITY

Dr. Joe Curnow is part of the library advocacy group Millennium for All. Started in 2019 after security screening was first introduced at the Millennium Library, the organization speaks out against the renewed security measures.

She says Millennium for All pushes for the City to use evidence-based strategies that cost less and support library staff and community members instead of the current measures that can push people away.

According to a Millennium for All study published in 2019, airport-style security screening causes a 25 to 32 per cent reduction in people entering the library. The security measures have also forced many programs to either move elsewhere or shut down. The Community Connections space that opened in April 2022 has been closed since police and security screening returned to the library.

"A lot of organizations and nonprofits don't feel they can say to their users that it's a safe space. They're likely to get harassed at the door or turned away based on race, class and gender. As a result, these organizations don't feel they can use the library for their programming right now," Curnow says.

The city has dedicated $100,000 for 2023 for ongoing security measures at the Millennium Library. In January, Winnipeg's chief administrative officer, Michael Jack, told CBC these measures cost the City "in excess of $10,000 a week." No other city in Canada has this level of library security.

"For every hour we have these two special-duty cops, we could pay for a full-time librarian who's dedicated to the Community Connections space, a dedicated library assistant, one or two crisis workers, plus consumables," Curnow says.

She also says increasing the number of staff can effectively help library employees and

visitors feel safer.

"City council keeps cutting away until there's literally no time for staff to have a 15-minute overlap in shifts or have safety briefings or to have enough people on the floor to respond to needs quickly," she says.

Curnow says the City can best support the WPL and the Millennium Library by reopening the Community Connections space, funding the Community Safety Host program (a peer-based security service), increasing staffing and bringing the security team in-house.

HAVING A VOICE

Kirsten Wurmann is a retired librarian who worked for 11 years as a WPL branch manager. She says that despite doing exciting work and having it align with her social-justice values, she began to feel misunderstood and unsupported as a librarian.

To be a librarian, individuals must complete a master's degree in library science. Manitoba currently offers no such program.

"I certainly took a cut when I came here to Winnipeg from Edmonton. I took the $20,000 a year cut," she says. "In my retirement letter, I actually said that it became offensive considering the workload."

Wurmann says now that she is retired, she is able to speak freely about the issues she experienced while working at the WPL.

"Working for a public library, working for the City, you cannot share the realities that

are actually happening," she says. In the past, Wurmann says library employees have been reprimanded for retweets or sharing news articles about the library.

"I know some workers have felt that their social media is being watched or monitored. It sounds ridiculous, but this is the reality. Folks are nervous."

During an executive policy committee meeting on March 16, Wurmann spoke as a delegate about the upcoming library budget and her experience as a librarian. As she began speaking, three of the six councillors present walked out.

"For the very first time, I spoke to my former bosses and shared my reality and my story and three out of the six left. It just felt so rude, and I felt hurt. I was starting to feel actually even a little emotional," Wurmann says.

Couns. Brian Mayes and Jeff Browaty say they had to leave to use the bathroom and take a call, and their actions weren't related to who was speaking. Coun. Sherri Rollins says she left to check on people who were affected by a homophobic incident.

Wurmann says she understands that it was a long day, but this incident raises the issue about a lack of opportunities for citizens to share their voice.

She describes how libraries have become more than places for books. Now, they serve as community spaces.

"It's the neighbourhood living room," Wurmann says. "It's a space where you can bring in food and drink. You can talk to

neighbours. You can have storytime. You can use computers, which is a lifesaving service that we provide. It's such a growing social service."

Brown says the City needs to listen to library staff and recognize the importance of supporting Winnipeg's libraries. "The libraries are more than a place for books," she says. "They're a community pillar."
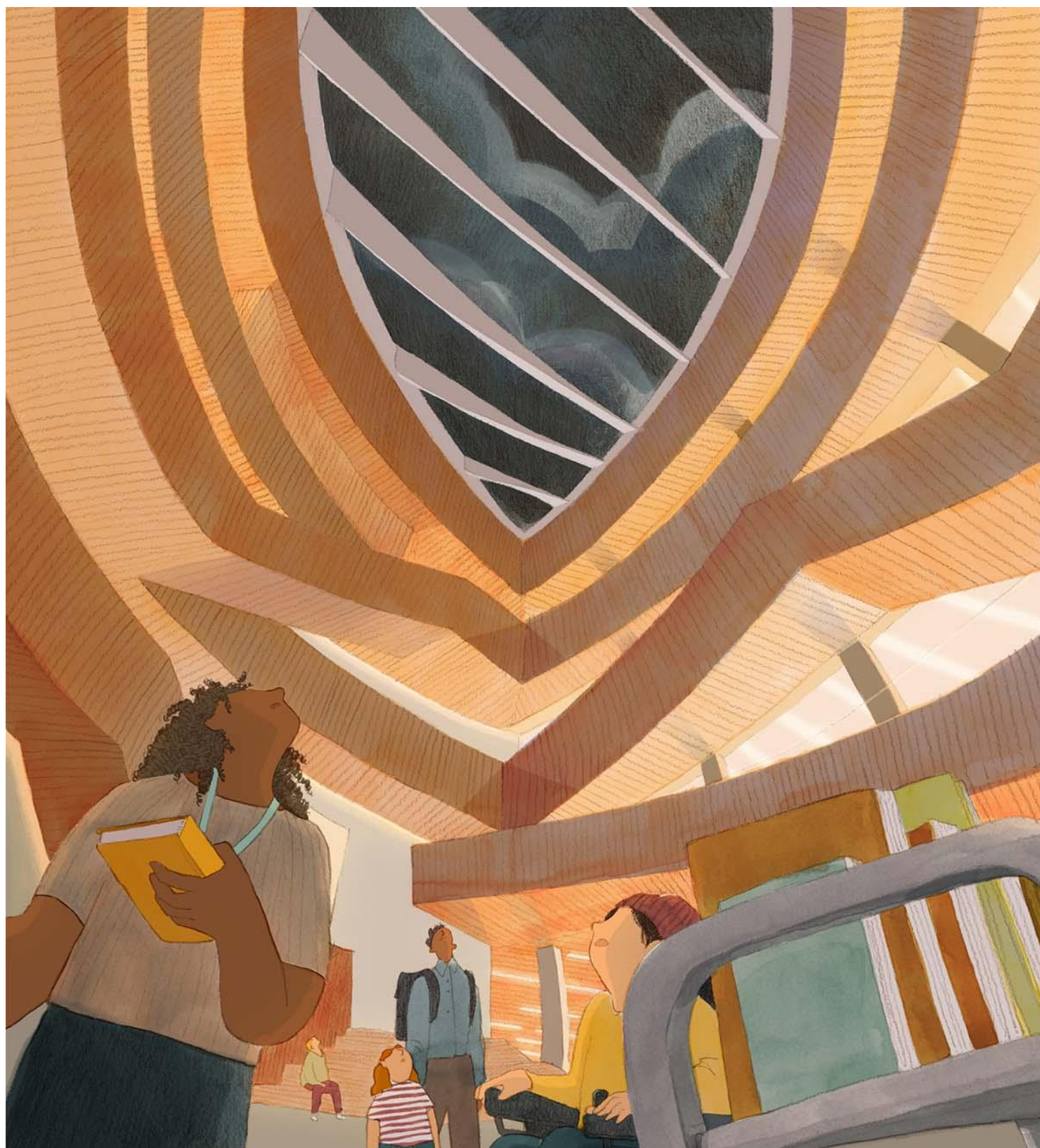

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Have You Been to the Library Lately?

Librarians once worried about shushing patrons. Now they have to deal with mental health episodes, the homelessness crisis, and random violence

BY NICHOLAS HUNE-BROWN

THE ONTARIO Library Association Super Conference is the largest annual gathering of bookish public servants in the country. The days-long event at the sprawling Metro Toronto Convention Centre is both an industry trade show and the de facto meeting spot for all of Canada's librarians—a place to catch up on the latest in cataloguing, hobnob with distant colleagues, and take stock of the state of the library.

On a bitterly cold Friday this February, the final day of the 2023 event, vendors in the exposition hall upstairs were busy hawking everything from book-moving services to exotic animal visits. Former Toronto mayor David Miller sat alone at the University of Toronto Press booth, surrounded by copies of his latest hardcover, while a buzzy line formed down the aisle for signed copies of a picture book about a giant beet. Downstairs, in the corporately neutral confines of meeting room 202D, a full house had gathered to talk about one of the burning issues at the heart of the modern public library.

Rahma Hashi, a social worker with a bright smile and a beige head scarf, began the session. Over the past decade or so, in response to the waves of vulnerable people arriving at their doors, many North American libraries have begun hiring in-house social workers. Hashi was one of Toronto Public Library's first. Part of her role, she explained, was to make partnerships with shelters, with the idea that the library should always be a welcoming place for everyone but the real work of providing service to people who are homeless should be handled by the professionals.

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The reality is somewhat different. In Toronto, over the past few months, Hashi explained, there were about 11,000 people experiencing homelessness, according to the city's count. That's around 11,000 people who may be coming in to a library space to warm up during the day, she said. Some branches are open later than other social services, and most shelters in Toronto had been full anyway, so library workers were often asked to do the impossible—find shelter for someone in a system that often had no room. "When people come to us at the eleventh hour, when we're closing, and they say, 'Can you help me find a bed for tonight?' we call Central Intake, and they're at 100 percent capacity."

Vicky Varga, a twenty-four-year veteran of Edmonton Public Library, described how the city had moved toward fully integrating social work into the activities of its main library branch. "People really do seek this out, because it's the last truly public space, as I'm sure everybody in this room knows," she said.

It's an evocative phrase—"the last public space." It's one I heard over and over while reporting this story, often invoked as a kind of badge of honour. For the library CEOs who need to justify their budgets to unsympathetic city councils, the phrase emphasizes the importance of their institutions: like the "last old-growth rainforests" or "the last Galápagos tortoises," "the last public space" sounds like something we should probably spend some money to preserve.

As a description of the role of the library, the phrase is also a remarkable illustration of how far the institution has come. Libraries were once places to access books. They are now places to access everything? The last place to access anything? As the social safety net has frayed, libraries have found themselves filling in the gaps. The conversation in room 202D that afternoon was the sound of library workers struggling with the reality that, despite their best efforts, an institution organized around lending out hardcovers might not be up for the job.

Every library branch in every city has its own specific issues, but in conversations with workers across the country, the broad strokes of the crisis are the same. Librarians say they're seeing more people with more complex needs than ever before. In Toronto, the number of recorded "incidents," a term which includes violent, disruptive, or threatening events, spiked from 7.16 per 100,000 visits in 2012 to 35.74 in 2021. In Edmonton, where librarians are offered training to administer naloxone, 2022 saw ninety-nine opioid poisonings across the system. On Vancouver Island, some workers went on strike for nearly two months over workplace concerns and a lack of wage growth. In a letter to library trustees, they argued that "management has refused to agree to many important proposals—including solutions to workplace violence and mental health impacts." Library workers across the country report being attacked, spat on, threatened, sexually assaulted. They describe the emotional toll that results from not having the necessary resources to help the people who come to them, day after day. They talk about picking up the phone to call for help and realizing that nobody's coming.

When the floor opened for questions that afternoon in Toronto, hands shot up. A grey-haired man wanted to know how many social workers Edmonton had hired. "Winnipeg just added its third, and there just aren't enough hours in the day for the demand," he said quietly. "How are you going to increase support for staff?" asked a woman near the front. A man mentioned that, because some of Toronto's branches that have more difficult patrons are unpopular among staff, the least experienced, least senior employees often end up working there.

"What is the next step?" asked a woman from Vancouver Public Library. It was the question that seemed to be on everyone's mind. People, she said bluntly, were dying. "At what point do library workers, managers, directors speak directly to governments?"

The speakers murmured vague answers about each person doing their best to make change within their own realm, but the truth was there were no good answers. The session ended, and the attendees shuffled out into the vast carpeted expanse of the convention centre. But in the months since, that conversation has continued—in discussions between library CEOs, in meetings between union leaders, and in chats between harried workers on their breaks: What is the next step? Where does the library go from here? Because it's clear that being "the last public space" isn't a privilege. It's a sign that something has gone terribly wrong.

L IBRARIANS ARE a remarkably collegial group, quick to praise one another. Ask them which libraries are doing interesting things, and they'll talk about Halifax's gorgeous Central Library and Edmonton's innovative social programs, Vancouver's community work on the Downtown Eastside and the herculean feat of running Toronto's 100 branches, one of the biggest library systems in North America, with nearly 1.2 million cardholders and about 10.6 million items in its collection. "One that we all admire incredibly, not only for the building but for their innovation, is Calgary Public," said Mary Chevreau, CEO of Kitchener Public Library.

Calgary is a surprising mecca on the Prairies. It's one of the largest systems in North America, with 57 percent of Calgarians carrying a library card. The new Central Library, which opened in 2018, is an architectural wonder: a six-level ark rising up over a light rail line. A curling tunnel of cedar at the entrance leads patrons into a lofty, pleasingly off-kilter atrium that does the thing that parliaments, cathedrals, and other great buildings are supposed to do: create awe and uplift—the feeling that you are in a place where something of significance is happening. The building was responsible for putting Calgary on the *New York Times* list of "52 Places to Go" in 2019 and was included in *Time* magazine's 100 "World's Greatest Places" that same year.

I visited early one morning in February, a mild chinook wind blowing in over the mountains and the building's trapezoidal windows glowing warmly against the electric-blue dawn. At 8 a.m., an hour before opening, a small crowd had already gathered outside the doors. The branch is located in Calgary's East Village and was intended to revitalize a corner of the city that had long been neglected. The Salvation Army is next door, with other drop-ins and social services clustered in the area. Most of the people outside were single men—smoking cigarettes, carrying duffle bags, whiling away the time.

There is a sense of theatre in the moments before the opening of a big public building, a hushed current of anticipation before the action. Inside, workers trickled in, shedding their heavy winter coats and putting on the library's bright-blue vests. In the quiet atrium, you could hear the gentle whirr of the "Bookscalator," a long conveyor belt that shuttles tomes from the return slot downstairs up to the second floor to be sorted. At 8:50, three security guards came down the elevators to their stations by the entrance. And then it was showtime, the doors swinging open and a stream of patrons wandering in —college students clutching iced coffees even in February, thickly bearded middle-aged men who looked like they'd been sleeping rough, a kid in a Spider-Man costume who entered excitedly and then immediately demanded his mother carry him because his "body is tired."

Sarah Meilleur, the forty-three-year-old CEO, took in the scene. Meilleur is a small and sprightly die-hard library nerd who has the Dewey Decimal number for books about librarians tattooed on her ankle. She is a lifer, beginning her time at Calgary Public Library shelving books after university and then slowly working her way to the top job in 2021. "I didn't necessarily think I would be a leader or a CEO," said Meilleur brightly. "I just loved the work. I think, in libraries, you feel like you make a difference every day."

As a bookish only child, Meilleur remembers going down to Memorial Park Library with her parents to get her first library card. That location, a stately building on a landscaped park, was Calgary's first. It was opened in 1912 and funded by Andrew Carnegie, the steel industrialist and philanthropist who used more than $55 million (US) of his fortune, an astronomical number at the time, to build 2,509 public libraries around the world in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, including 125 in Canada. Carnegie, who only donated to municipalities committed to funding the maintenance and operation of the library, catalyzed this country's public system. Often with vaulted ceilings and ornate architecture, Carnegie libraries were designed to inspire the masses. They were places to access books, that great

democratizing force. "There was no use to which money could be applied so productive of good to boys and girls who have good within them and ability and ambition to develop it, as the founding of a public library," Carnegie wrote in his autobiography.

In the decades that followed, the core purpose of the library remained the same. People deserved access to books, books were expensive and best shared, and so an entire infrastructure and profession sprung up around that fact. Soon, armies of workers were needed to shelve books and process magazines and journals. Librarianship became a vocation, with attendant degrees and graduate programs and associations.

That version of the library is now gone. "Libraries have seen more change in the past twenty years than at any time in the past hundred," architecture professor Brian Edwards wrote in 2002. The years since have only solidified that transformation. The rise of the internet meant that one of the reference librarian's main functions could now be done with the click of a mouse. RFID tags and other forms of automation meant that those armies of workers were no longer needed behind their desks, sorting books, and would need to find new roles.

At the time, countless articles asked if new technology meant "the death of the public library." Instead, the institution completely transformed itself. Libraries carved out a new role providing online access to those who needed it. They abandoned the big central desk, stopped shushing patrons, and pushed employees out onto the floor to do programming. Today, you'll find a semester's load of classes, events, and seminars at your local library: on digital photography, estate planning, quilting, audio recording, taxes for seniors, gaming for teens, and countless "circle times" in which introverts who probably chose the profession because of their passion for Victorian literature are forced to perform "The Bear Went over the Mountain" to rooms full of rioting toddlers.

In the midst of this transformation, new demands began to emerge. Libraries have always been a welcoming space for the entire community. Alexander Calhoun, Calgary's first librarian, used the space for adult education programs and welcomed "transients" and the unemployed into the building during the Depression. But the past forty years of urban life have seen those demands grow exponentially.

In the late 1970s, "homelessness" as we know it today didn't really exist; the issue only emerged as a serious social problem in the 1980s. Since then, as governments have abandoned building social housing and rents have skyrocketed, homelessness in Canada has transformed into a snowballing human rights issue. Meanwhile, the opioid crisis has devastated communities, killing more than 34,000 Canadians between 2016 and 2022, according to the Public Health Agency of Canada. And the country's mental health care system, always an underfunded patchwork of services, is today completely unequipped to deal with demand. According to the Canadian Institute for Health Information, from 2020 to 2021, Canadians waited a median of twenty-two days for their first counselling session. As other communal support networks have suffered cutbacks and disintegrated, the library has found itself as one of the only places left with an open door.

Today, when Meilleur describes the role of the library, it's as "a place for community connections and a place for people to come together to dream big." It's where people go to fill in online applications for government assistance and print out immigration forms in duplicate. It's a shared office for students and workers stuck in overcrowded apartments. It's one of the last places you can go to warm up or use the washroom, where you won't be hustled along by security or forced to buy something.

If books remain the library's brand, they are no longer its primary focus. In 2015, Calgary trimmed its collection by about 13 percent and relocated tens of thousands of texts from its shelves, according to the *Calgary Herald*, following a trend of libraries "managing down" their print collections. Many of those books are still available for order, stored off site in a warehouse somewhere, but Calgary's branches themselves are noticeably light on printed material, leaving more space to do the programming, meeting, and hanging out that are now at the core of their mandate.

When people tell the story of this transformation, from book repository to social services hub, it's usually as an uncomplicated triumph. A recent "love letter" to libraries in the *New York Times* has a typical capsule history: "As local safety nets shriveled, the library roof magically expanded from umbrella to tarp to circus tent to airplane hangar. The modern library keeps its citizens warm, safe, healthy, entertained, educated, hydrated and, above all, connected."

That story, while heartwarming, obscures the reality of what has happened. No institution "magically" takes on the role of the entire welfare state, especially none as underfunded as the public library. If the library has managed to expand its protective umbrella, it has done so after a series of difficult decisions. And that expansion has come with costs.

FROM LATE 2020 to early 2021, University of Toronto information science professor Siobhan Stevenson conducted a survey of front-line library workers in four public systems in Canada, asking them about their experiences of violence and incivility.

The results painted a picture of a predominantly female profession that could be difficult, traumatic, and sometimes dangerous. About two-thirds of respondents reported feeling unsafe, from a few times a month to a few times a week. As many as 84 percent had been victims of verbal intimidation, while 75 percent had experienced an unwelcome invasion of personal space or physical intimidation. Four percent said they had been the subject of an attempted rape.

"I have been threatened with violence on a number of occasions, knifed and punched in the face," one respondent reported. "Verbal threats of rape, at least once a month," said another. "As time passes, I have felt more unsafe in my workplace—which surprises me," said a third. "I love my job but it has changed dramatically over the last few years for the worse."

One Toronto library worker I spoke with, who asked not to be named for fear of professional reprisal, described conditions many library workers were completely unprepared for and a management slow to admit there was a problem. "So many people go into library school because they have an image that they will be cataloguing or selecting books or dealing with people's reading interests," he said. "No, you're not." The reality, he said, was closer to working in a neighbourhood bar. "Some bars have a quiet clientele. And some are nasty and violent."

These problems aren't unique to libraries. In every public place, the evidence of a social welfare system that has been chipped away at for decades is on display. In early 2023, a series of violent incidents erupted on Toronto transit. The city's response was simple: they threw police at the problem. If you barred a certain category of person from the bus, perhaps the larger systemic issues would take care of themselves.

For both ideological and practical reasons, libraries do not have that option. "We can't lock the door, we're for everyone. So that is the starting point," says Åsa Kachan, CEO of Halifax Public Libraries (and chair of The Walrus's Educational Review Committee). The library's openness is the best thing about it, but it also creates inherent challenges. "The tension is between genuinely wanting to be a welcoming, open space for everyone. And then, at the same time, keeping staff safe," says Stevenson.

According to some workers, management is not doing enough to uphold the second half of that equation. "We have found that there has been an uptick in terms of violent incidents in the libraries, and the library as an employer has been very slow to respond to that," says Brandon Haynes, president of the Toronto Public Library Workers Union. Part of the reason for the slow response, Haynes believes, is management's desire to protect the library's image. "There's a real concern, and I think it's a valid concern, with portraying the library as a safe and welcoming space that's open and accessible to everyone," says Haynes. There are worries that if a beloved institution becomes known as a dangerous, unpleasant place, both visits and funding could suffer. "But I think we can't just hide the voices of the library workers," says Haynes. "I think that in order to address the problem, you need to actually put a spotlight on it and not sweep it under the rug."

The desire to put a good face on things can extend to front-line staff themselves. "This idea that the library is all important and can do no wrong kind of pushes library staff to do more and more and use more and more of their time and energy to the point where folks are burning out," says Heather Hill, chair of the master of library and information science program at Western University.

Talk to library workers and you'll find people eagerly going beyond any reasonable description of their duties. The average library page—the precarious workers, often students, who shelve, tidy, and organize books—makes $16.50 an hour at Toronto Public Library. Librarians—all of whom have master's degrees—earn between $72,054 and $81,372 a year. Both are on the front lines, and both have seen their responsibilities expand, doing work today that might otherwise be done by a social worker, an early childhood educator, a harm-reduction expert, a therapist, or a settlement worker.

In Calgary's Saddletowne branch, Kelly Stinn, a soft-spoken library veteran in a cardigan, told me she was concerned about what she has been seeing since the start of the pandemic. "We're seeing a lot more people that are leaning on the library

more heavily, just because the service that might have been there previously is either overextended, changed their mandate, or no longer exists," she says. One patron walked in recently and just burst into tears. She didn't know anyone in Canada, had never had mental health counselling before, and didn't know where to turn. Stinn calmed her down. She set her up with an appointment and asked if she needed a bus ticket or taxi chit to get downtown. "At one point, she just said to me, 'Can I have a hug?'" Stinn remembers. So she gave her a hug.

Stinn was noticing something else as well—an increase of kids in serious mental distress. They were emerging from years of lockdowns and illness with debilitating anxiety. Parents were noticing their children struggling in school. According to the Canadian Mental Health Association, children are experiencing extreme stress due to the pandemic. And three out of four can't get the care they need, either because it's unavailable or not covered by health insurance. Many of them were ending up at the library, and Stinn felt utterly unequipped to help them. So last summer, she started a graduate certificate in children's mental health at the University of Calgary. "At least if I have a better understanding, I can share that with the staff here," she says.

The work of people like Stinn is inspiring. But a country's immigration settlement programs or children's mental health care can't be dependent on underpaid librarians getting extra graduate degrees. Heather Hill points to a 2018 journal article by Fobazi Ettarh, "Vocational Awe and Librarianship: The Lies We Tell Ourselves," that set off conversations among her colleagues. Casting the work of libraries as holy and beyond reproach, Ettarh argues, puts unreasonable, unsustainable expectations on workers to act as saints, as pillars of democracy. "Adding duties like life-or-death medical interventions to already overstrained job requirements is an extreme but very real example of job creep," Ettarh writes. "The library's purpose may be to serve, but is that purpose so holy when it fails to serve those who work within its walls every day?"

The changing atmosphere in libraries can be difficult to talk about. "I think sometimes even library workers and librarians, who are usually left of centre on some level, find their own ideological commitments challenged," says Stevenson. "Nobody wants to say, 'I actually don't want to deal with that overdose in the washroom. I'm not comfortable dealing with someone who is experiencing a serious mental health crisis. I didn't take this job for that.'"

One worker from Winnipeg became emotional when talking to me about her job. (Staff aren't allowed to speak to the press, and the city denied an interview request.) She explained that threats and verbal abuse were common, and dealing with erratic behaviour was par for the course. As a veteran of more than ten years, she wasn't particularly sensitive. But it was clear to her that, in recent years, the library was being asked to do far more than it could sustain. "It just becomes this really small space where all the issues that are in society are just magnified," she said. Staff, she told me, were regularly being retrained in de-escalation techniques, seemingly with the idea that perhaps new training or a new attitude could mitigate the need for more funding or more employees or a functioning supportive housing system. "I spend a lot of time thinking, 'Is this really what my job is now?' And what is the library? I don't even think I know anymore," she said. "I don't remember the last time I actually did my real job."

One of the issues that made her most upset, however, was how her experiences and those of her co-workers were dismissed by advocates who valued the work that libraries were doing with the vulnerable without seeming to value the workers themselves. "I think what makes it worse is to be minimalized and treated like I don't have the right to safety," she said through tears. "I find that extremely hurtful." She'd noticed a lot of early retirements among colleagues. A lot of sick days. A lot of leaves of absence. "People have just gone."

There are no easy solutions to any of this. In early 2019, after staff reported a rise in violent incidents, Winnipeg's Millennium Library took the unprecedented step of introducing airport-style security at its entrance. Patrons were searched with metal-detecting wands. They had their bags checked, with anything deemed dangerous confiscated.

The move led to protests. A community group called Millennium for All produced a report arguing that the presence of heavy security deterred marginalized people from using the library. Would a homeless person, carrying all their

possessions, submit to having their bags searched? Would a Black or Indigenous visitor who had bad experiences with the police simply avoid the building? "This barrier leads some of the people who benefit most from library services to avoid the library, effectively limiting their access," the report read.

The number of violent incidents did fall. But so, too, did the number of people using the library. Instead of serving the community, the library was pushing people out into the cold. About a year after they were implemented, the extra security measures were scrapped.

Then, on December 11, 2022, twenty-eight-year-old Tyree Cayer was fatally stabbed after an altercation at Millennium Library. Four teenagers between the ages of fourteen and sixteen were charged with his death. The library closed for about two weeks as administrators tried to figure out how to respond. When it fully reopened, a walk-through metal detector had been installed, and police officers were stationed at the door.

O VER THE months I spent writing this story, I drifted from library to library. I set up my laptop in Saddletowne in Calgary as groups of gangly teenagers crunched themselves into tiny nooks in the kids' area because, as the librarian told me, "teens like to be tucked away." I went to my local Toronto branch and let my six-year-old forage for as many books about cheetahs as he could find. I used the free Libby app to borrow a digital copy of _The Library Book_ by Susan Orlean and the free Hoopla app to stream the first thirty minutes of _The Public_, a well-intentioned but very boring Emilio Estevez movie about a group of homeless people taking over a Cincinnati library. I walked into the soaring atrium of the Toronto Reference Library, probably my favourite building in the city, and was hit with the feeling, so rare in modern life, of being in a beautiful, thoughtful place created and maintained for my benefit—a place that wanted nothing from me other than to make my life marginally better. A public place.

Today, library leaders are recognizing that these public places may have reached the limits of their capacity. According to Pilar Martinez, the CEO of Edmonton Public Library and the chair of the safety and security working group that the Canadian Urban Libraries Council assembled this January, it was time to put some "guardrails" on what libraries ought to be doing with their resources.

There had been talk about a library branch providing clothing to patrons, for example. It was a serious community need, after all, and a place where the library could conceivably step in. But was that their role? And while the three social workers they'd hired in Edmonton had made a huge impact, Martinez said, "that's just not an area that we're going to grow and provide library resources and funding to add additional social workers." Librarians like Martinez were drawing a line. There was the sense, she said, that the Band-Aid solutions they had been trying to provide may even have been obscuring the severity of the problems from governments. It was time to demand help from people outside the building.

"I think what happened is, for a long time, libraries swung in one direction, which is 'We don't do anything but books,'" says Amanda French, the manager of social development at Toronto Public Library. "And then they swung wildly in another direction, which is 'We do everything. We do everything.'" Now she sees libraries swinging back to a more sustainable equilibrium.

That approach, however, requires governments to ease that burden. As libraries have taken on more responsibility, they haven't seen a simultaneous increase in funding. If a public library wants to hire another social worker, does that mean they need to wait for a librarian to leave? Putting cops at the door in Winnipeg rather than hiring more support staff may make sense considering the police's budget is about $327 million, ten times higher than the library system's allocated funds, and this year's police budget increase was about ten times higher too.

Fixing libraries means more funding to bring up staffing levels to give workers the support they need. But it also means doing things that are much more difficult: building more social housing, hiring more social workers, investing in mental health workers, schools, community centres, and everything else needed to address problems before they reach the

library's doors. Libraries have proven themselves to be incredibly adaptive, contorting themselves into various shapes to serve the needs of their communities. That's another favourite librarian saying: "A good library reflects its community." But that goes both ways. A troubled community is reflected in its libraries. And if the social problems of twenty-first-century life continue to grow with little restraint, they will inevitably find their way into the city's last public places.

In *Palaces for the People*, Eric Klinenberg's insightful 2018 book about the importance of "social infrastructure," he writes: "Everyday life in libraries is a democratic experiment." There are few other institutions that take as their constituency *everyone*. Democracy, of course, is messy. None of that work is magical. It's grinding, difficult, always compromised. But watching a library function—doing the mundane, day-to-day work of accommodating an entire city within its walls—is also remarkable.

That February morning in Calgary, when the doors opened, visitors scattered to every corner of the building. Prince, a twenty-five-year-old international student from Ghana, set up his laptop on the third floor to study, as he does most days. A sixty-seven-year-old retired carpenter browsed the shelves, finally selecting a copy of Anne Applebaum's *Twilight of Democracy*, before heading downstairs to the cafe to meet a friend. Jeff, a fifty-five-year-old in a big black hoodie, who was staying at the drop-in centre nearby, went straight to the laptop collection on the fourth floor and checked out a Chromebook to look for a landscaping job in the spring.

Sneha, meanwhile, sat at a little wooden table in the children's area with her four-year-old son, Joshya, who was contentedly filling a large sheet of butcher paper with intricate crayon drawings. That morning, they'd come down from their home in the northeast with her husband, who was working at the Salvation Army next door, and now they were spending the day here—reading picture books, choosing DVDs and CDs to take home, using the climbing structure built in the kids' area.

Sneha said that this was Joshya's first time at Central Library, but they were regulars at their home branch. It was the perfect place to bring a kid too young for school, a spot to find playmates. Sneha had been a dentist in India but was still finding her footing here, and through the library, she was taking a free online course in medical office administration that, she hoped, would help lead to work. They'd arrived only a few months before. Everything was still new, and life in a big foreign city could be difficult. But Sneha and her family were doing okay. They had found their way to the library.

About Nicholas Hune-Brown (View All Articles)

Nicholas Hune-Brown (@nickhunebrown) has written for *Toronto Life*, *Hazlitt*, and *The Believer*.

About Dorothy Leung (View All Articles)

Dorothy is an illustrator based in the suburbs near Toronto. She studied architecture at the University of Waterloo and illustration at Sheridan College.

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By the book: Ottawa Public Library takes a stand on intellectual rights, book bans and cancel culture

As folks from across the political spectrum challenge library material, OPL allows users to have unfettered access to any information, as long as it is legal.

Joanne Laucius

Published Jun 12, 2023 • Last updated 7 hours ago • 8 minute read

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All is not well in the stacks. The past year has been a rough one for libraries and librarians.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

In New Brunswick, there have been more challenges to materials in public libraries in the first few weeks of this spring than there have been in the province's entire history, said James Turk, director of the Director of Toronto Metropolitan University's Centre for Free Expression.

In southern Manitoba, library staff have been accused of being pedophiles and there was a campaign to press municipalities to defund libraries.

In British Columbia, the RCMP investigated after a member of the advocacy group Action4Canada objected to books in public schools including It's Perfectly Normal, a book about puberty and sexual health, and The Bluest Eye, a 1970 novel by Nobel Prize-winning author Toni Morrison. The RCMP concluded that books did not meet the definition of child pornography, as was claimed.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

Not all challenges have come from the right side of the political spectrum. Dr. Seuss' 1950 children's book If I Ran the Zoo has been challenged in Ottawa and cities all over North America for racist images and racial stereotypes. In 2021, Dr. Seuss Enterprises withdrew If I Ran the Zoo and five other books from publication.

Earlier this year, the publisher of Roald Dahl children's classics including The Witches and Matilda came under fire over revisions to references to weight, height, mental health and gender. In the new edition of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, Augustus Gloop is no longer "fat," he is "enormous."

Amid the crossfire, the Ottawa Public Library has stepped up with an updated intellectual freedom position statement. In a nutshell, the policy allows users to have unfettered access to any information, as long as it is legal according to Canadian courts.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

Ottawa's libraries have the original versions of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, while If I Ran the Zoo is kept in the adult section.

"We have made our own bold statement about how we intend to live this value. I think we have always stood for that, but we've never planted the flag and made our own claim," said Sonia Bebbington, who was appointed the Ottawa Public Library's CEO last fall.

"There are right-wing people who don't want to read things. There are left-wing people who don't want to read things," said Turk. "The laws and the courts set the limits. Just because I don't like something doesn't mean you shouldn't have access to it. If the Ottawa Public Library got rid of every book that people found harmful, distasteful or offensive, there wouldn't be a book left in the library."

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

Policies like the Ottawa Public Library's that identify Canadian law as the baseline mean libraries are better placed to serve and represent the full, diverse range of Canadians — and library collections are less vulnerable to ever-changing external pressures, said Wendy Wright, the chair of the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' intellectual freedom committee.

Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally-protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable, said Wright.

At the same time, the number of challenges to not only library books, but also programs and events, has increased exponentially, she said. Some library staff and administrators have received hostile messages by email, phone and social media.

In southern Manitoba, librarians have been called pedophiles and child groomers. The seven municipal councils that support five local public library branches were pressured to defund the libraries. Some library staff felt overwhelmed and contemplated quitting.

Cathy Ching had never seen anything like it in 17 years as a librarian. "Everyone was gun shy every time someone they didn't know walked into a library," said the director of library services at South Central Regional Library in Manitoba, which has branches in Winkler, Altona, Morden, Miami and Manitou.

"Last fall, every day we would wake up to 10 or 15 new emails. I missed deadlines. I didn't get grant applications in on time. By December, if someone asked if I wanted to walk away, I would have said 'Yes.'"

Before the pandemic, libraries would occasionally receive a challenge to a book that a library user had read and either wanted moved to a section dedicated to an older age group or removed from the collection altogether, said Wright. "What has changed is that people are now submitting entire lists of books and demanding they be removed, often without having read them, or after having taken a single excerpt or illustration out of context."

Some lists submitted to libraries don't even bother itemizing all the titles requested to be removed," she explained. Instead, it might list a few and request the same treatment for all the other existing titles by the author.

Action4Canada, which did not respond to a request for interview, has urged its members to serve a "notice of liability" to librarians, teachers and others, warning them that they "will be held personally responsible for exposing minors to any form of pornography/sexually explicit material, activities or organizations promoting sexual deviancy and the exploitation of minors." (The notices have no legal standing and are wrong in their claims about the law, said Turk.)

The irony of censorship in the name of parental rights is that one parent demanding the removal of a book or program from a library infringes on the rights of other parents who approve of access for their own children, said Wright.

"Each family is different and intellectual freedom is a core value of libraries. We provide access to all points of view so people can choose what they wish to read, view, hear or attend or not, and decide for themselves what to accept or reject."

For libraries, the concept of intellectual freedom goes beyond books and other materials in library collections. It also includes meeting room rentals and internet filtering.

"What's occurring now — and I think a lot of the influence comes from the U.S. — is that challenges are taking the form of protests. That includes not just books, but programs. Drag story times have been challenged across the country."

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

The Ottawa Public Library is currently in the process of removing filters from internet stations in its libraries.

Filters are notoriously poor at targeting what they want to target, said Bebbington. A filter that is meant to filter out explicit content, for example, could also filter out information about breastfeeding or breast cancer.

Malware, child pornography and other content that has been identified and flagged as illegal will still be caught, she said.

In 2022, the American Library Association documented 1,269 demands to censor library books and resources, the highest number since the association began compiling data about censorship in libraries more than 20 years ago. In 2021, there were 729 challenges.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

How many books have been challenged in Canada — and which ones — is still unclear because there is no definitive Canadian database with information on all challenges. In February, the Centre for Free Expression and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations announced an agreement in principle to maintain a joint database of challenges to public and school libraries.

"Effectively, a book is 'banned' every time it is removed from a library," said Turk. "The Ottawa Public Library has taken a very principled position. It has become a model for what libraries should do."

OFF THE SHELVES?

Ottawa Public Library cardholders requested "reconsideration for 17 books in the Ottawa Public Library in 2022. This is a decrease in the number of such requests from 2021, when 25 titles were challenged, but about twice the number of challenges in previous years.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

Public library cardholders can challenge books or other content in the collection, library programs, display space, public computer or network access as well as meeting room bookings. Those who want to make a challenge must complete a request for reconsideration form on the library's website. Requests are reviewed by staff and a written response is made to the cardholder within 30 days.

If there is an objection to a book, the collection development staff reviews the content, and it will moved up to the division manager of client services.

A decision can be appealed in writing to the Ottawa Public Library's CEO if there is new information. A written response is provided within 30 days of receiving the appeal. That is the Ottawa Public Library's final decision, unless there is a legal ruling in a Canadian court of law.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW

Libraries select books and other materials through a collection development policy that includes criteria such as the anticipated demand; the quality of the subject matter; the reputation of the author and the

publishing house; and whether the book has been well-reviewed, said the Ottawa Public Library's CEO Sonia Bebbington. Books are weeded out of the collection if they are dated, damaged, or not taken out.

It's unusual for a book to be removed from the collection in response to a challenge, said Bebbington. In 2022, only two challenges resulted in an item being removed. The reasons given included the age of the material, insignificant research or cultural value, poor condition, or low usage.

Here's a look at the books in the Ottawa Public Library challenged in 2022 and what happened:

The Puzzle of the Happy Hooligan, an adult mystery by Stuart Palmer was challenged for racial slurs. It was retained. Palmer, who died in 1968, was a mystery writer whose books were published in the 1930s, 40s and 50s.

What is Black Lives Matter, a juvenile non-fiction book, was challenged for racism. It was retained
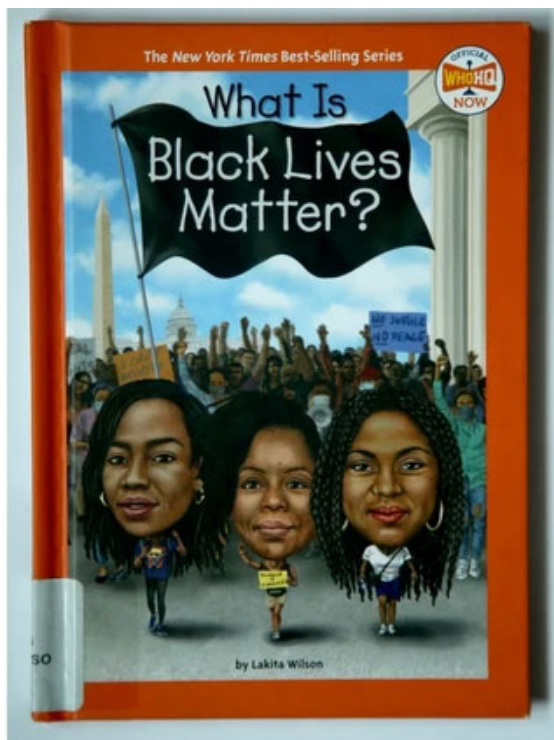
Fancy Nancy and the Dazzling Book Report, a juvenile early reader, was challenged for inaccurate information. It was retained.

Francine Poulet Meets the Ghost Racoon, a juvenile novel about an animal control officer, was challenged for "ableist language." It was retained.
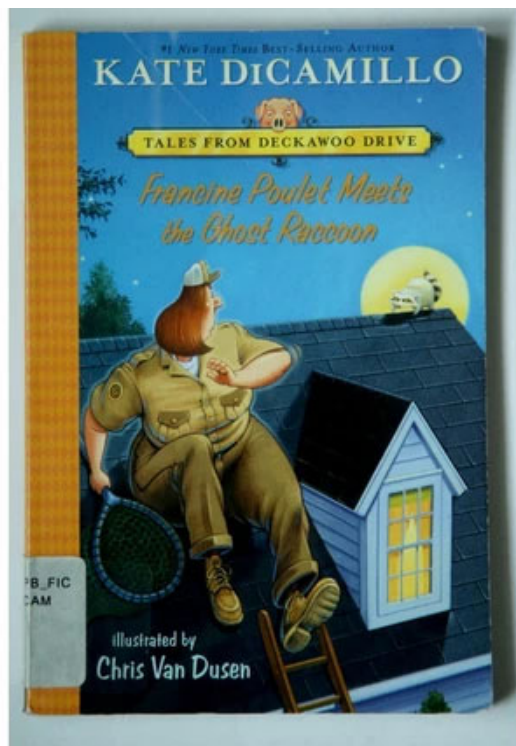
If I Ran the Zoo by Dr. Seuss was challenged for racist images. The book for children was first published in 1950. It is kept in the adult section of Ottawa libraries. The book was retained after the 2022 challenge.

STORY CONTINUES BELOW
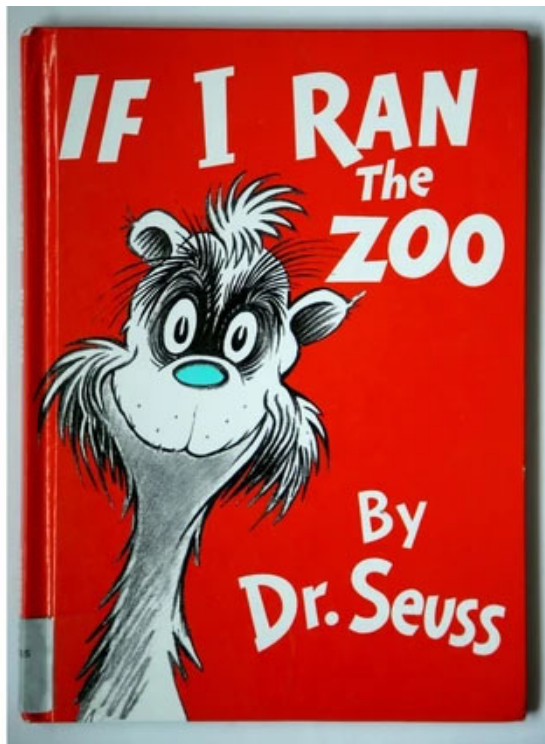
Sword and Scimitar, a non-fiction book about the conflict between Islam and the West, was challenged for racism and promoting hatred. It was retained. PHOTO BY JULIE OLIVER /Postmedia

My Moms Love Me, a juvenile picture book, was challenged for LGBTQ+ content "inappropriate for age." It was retained.
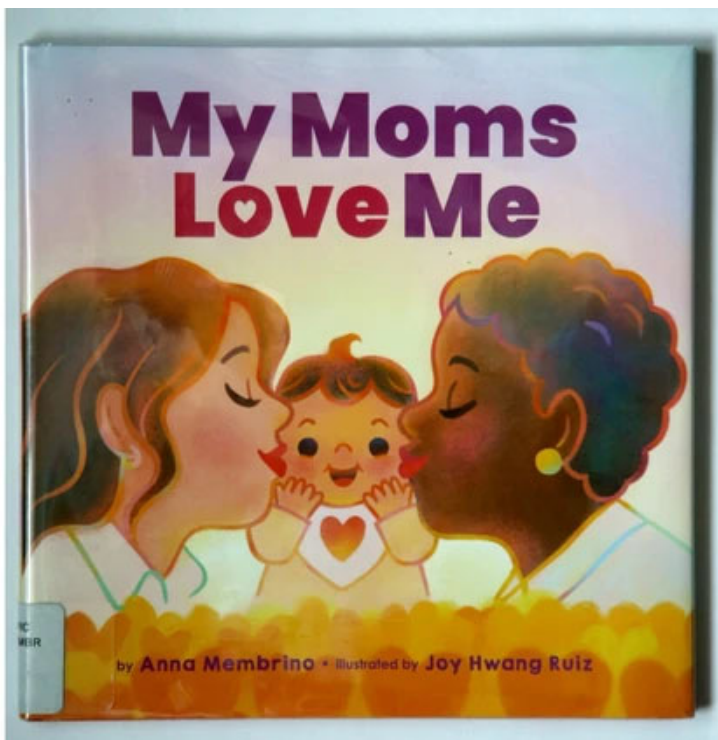
The publisher of **Hitler's Table Talk**, a nonfiction book of Adolf Hitler's monologues transcribed from 1941 to 1944 was challenged for "racist publisher." The book was withdrawn due to low usage, but remains available through interlibrary loans.

Petit Poilu Les sauveurs d'outoupousse, a juvenile "bande dessinée" (cartoon strip) in French was challenged for racist images and cultural appropriation. It was retained.

Boule à Zero, a juvenile comic in French was challenged for racist images. It was retained.

Two novels in Russian for adults were challenged as "political propaganda" and for promoting hate. They were both retained.

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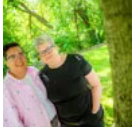
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Despite protesters, Drag Queen Storytime offers 'a way to connect'

Michael Owen
Jun 10, 2023 7:00 PM

1 / 11   E'Claire reads Auntie Uncle by Ellie Royce to a crowd of 53 people during Drag Queen Storytime in the Zima Room at the Bradford West Gwillimbury Public Library, on Saturday, June 10, 2023. | Michael Owen / BradfordToday

Listen to this article
00:05:00

Storytime was anything but a drag for attendees at Saturday's event.

The Devereaux Dolls E'Claire and Carmen entertained a crowd of 53 people during Drag Queen Storytime in the Zima Room at the Bradford West Gwillimbury Public Library, on Saturday.

Carmen read *Pride Puppy* by Robin Stevenson and then E'Claire read *Auntie Uncle* by Ellie Royce, to the group of children, parents and grandparents, many of whom were wearing PRIDE flags on their clothing in support of the community.

After the stories were over, attendees enjoyed making crafts and had the opportunity to meet and take photos with Carmen and E'Claire.

"It's important that families of any kind are able to learn their truth and learn it in a safe and comfortable environment," E'Claire said.

She stressed the events aren't just about pronouns, and also cover issues such as blended families, and provide a point of connection for those in the community.

"I think in smaller towns ... they know that there is a gay community; they know that there are drag queens, but they don't know how to connect or maybe don't have a way to connect. So by holding these events we open the doors for people to come," she said.

When it comes to choosing which books to read, E'Claire said they first look at audience composition such as the age range of the kids and the types of parents.

"Sometimes, we have a whole room full of dads," she said.

Next, she said they try to consider feedback from library patrons and parents seeking books related to their family's situation.

The Devereaux Dolls have starred in several storytime events this year, including in Penetanguishene, Midland, Alliston, Georgina, Newmarket and Aurora, and E'Claire said the overall reception has been positive.

"Anytime there was a protester there's been five more anti-protesters. So it's always been that the drag support has outnumbered the protesters five to one," she said.

Carmen added that sometimes they will attempt to educate protesters by inviting them to attend the events and see it for themselves.

"It's the fear of the unknown, and if they see that everything is positive and a learning experience, then I don't see any issues at all," she said.

While the atmosphere inside Saturday's event was noticeably positive, with children listening and laughing to stories and jokes, things were less positive outside the library where a few protesters held signs denouncing the event and engaged in discussions with supporters.

Library staff called South Simcoe Police Service to request the assistance of officers, two of whom attended and spoke with protesters to ensure everyone remained calm and safe.

Police described the protesters as peaceful.

Protester Matthew Lilley said he felt the event was inappropriate for children, saying that sometimes the outfits worn by presenters are over sexualized.

When asked what aspects of the event he found inappropriate, he said "everything."

"It's a 50-plus-year-old man dressed in a Mother Goose outfit with a character display of femininity ... and this is being passed off to children as normal, as appropriate. These are men. That is extremely confusing for young children who have no idea," he said.

E'Claire questioned how their Mother Goose outfits could be considered over sexualized.

"We get a lot of comments that we're strippers. Anytime you go to the theatre or you go to an adult event, you dress according to the event. It's the same for us. We are characters that we play and we're not going to bring an adult costume to a children's event. I don't know anyone in their right mind that would do that in or out of the gay community," she said.

Carmen stressed that The Devereauxs are known for the separation.

"We have our bar shows and restaurants and 19-plus events, and then we have the children and what we're doing is completely different. That needs to be clear," she said.

Lilley also had concerns about what he called gender ideology, "which is inherently harmful to children," he said.

When asked to describe the concept in his own words, Lilley emphasized "the mutability between male and female and the separation between sex and gender."

Health Canada defines gender identity as: "a person's internal sense or feeling of being male or female, which may or may not be the same as one's biological sex."

Lilley also had concerns about hormone-replacement therapy and gender-confirming surgery, but these topics were not included in Saturday's event.

Some of Lilley's other claims could not be factually verified.

A second session ran shortly after the first in which E'Claire read *Red: A Crayon Story* by Michael Hall and Carmen read *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell to a group of about 20 attendees.

About the Author: **Michael Owen**

Michael Owen has worked in news since 2009 and most recently joined Village Media in 2023 as a general assignment reporter for BradfordToday
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Illinois Bans Book Bans

By Phil Morehart / June 13, 2023 / Banned Books, General

Illinois has become the first U.S. state to ban book bans.

Governor J.B. Pritzker has signed into law a bill that requires libraries to adopt the

"Book bans are about censorship, marginalizing people, marginalizing ideas and facts," Pritzker said at the June 12 signing held at Harold Washington Library in downtown Chicago. "Regimes ban books, not democracies."

Illinois Secretary of State and State Librarian Alexi Giannoulias was a driving force behind the legislation. Speaking at the signing, he detailed the wide-reaching effects of book bans.

"Many librarians have been forced to quit after being harassed and subjected to intimidation and hateful messages on social media, others have been fired for refusing to remove books from circulation," he said. "The concept of banning books contradicts the very essence of what our country stands for. It also defies what education is all about: teaching our children to think for themselves. When books are banned, we're at risk from the harm that ignorance brings."

Pritzker said the new law is essential for inclusivity for everyone throughout the state.

"All Illinoisans deserve to see themselves reflected in the books that they read, the art that they see, the history they learn," Pritzker said.

ALA Executive Director Tracie D. Hall, also in attendance at Harold Washington Library, put the law into historic perspective.

"We insist that free people must always read freely. Free people read freely," she said. "History will surely assess this moment and the years to come and note that we librarians and legislators, civic leaders and community stewards, did not stand idly by and let the right to read and to freely access libraries be taken from us."

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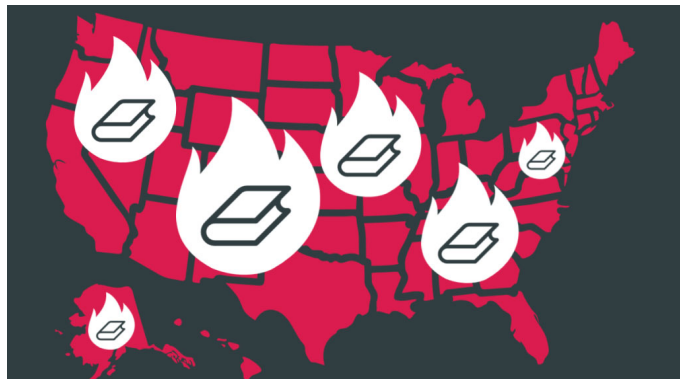
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MAY2023 CEO REPORT

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> **Speak UP** for diversity & inclusion

ACCESSIBLE SERVICES

Accessibility Advisory Committee

The Manager of Library Services and Collection Services presented to the Town of Innisfil's Accessibility Committee on May 10. She reviewed the Library's various services and collections that support accessible access, including:

- Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) services
- Home Library Delivery Service
- Large print books, audiobooks, ebooks, eaudiobooks
- DAISY players (audio player for those with a visual impairment)
- Book stands, magnifiers

Attendees were able to handle the devices listed above, and were asked to provide feedback in order to help the Library improve accessibility. The response was very positive, and attendees suggested the Library explore more ways to promote these services to the public.

National AccessAbility Week

National AccessAbility Week was celebrated from May 28 to June 3, 2023. With a theme of "Disability Inclusion: From Possibilities to Practice" the goal of the week is to highlight:
- the valuable contributions and leadership of persons with disabilities in Canada
- the work of allies, organizations and communities that are removing barriers
- ongoing efforts to become a more accessible and inclusive Canada
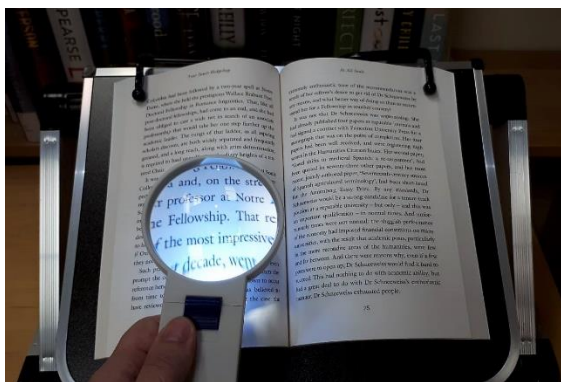
Through our social media channels we highlighted a number of the Library's accessible services including lendable devices and Home Library Service.

Open UP opportunities to strengthen connection & engagement with our community

BUILDING COMMUNITY PARTNERS
Storytelling Innisfil with Innisfil Toastmasters

The stage at Town Square hosted its first summer event on Saturday May 27 entitled *Innisfil Toastmasters Present: Storytelling Innisfil*. The Toastmasters are a terrific community partner, and the Library was able to provide support through marketing and use of audio equipment and setup on the day of the event using our portable sound system. Over the course of two hours, eight different speakers shared stories that entertained and educated as numerous residents stopped by to listen as they passed through Town Square.

Organizer Deborah McGrath provided the following message as thanks: "Two little words can't fully capture the appreciation we feel for all your hard work and support! The planning, promotion and presentation of our 'little event' was so well done! We were pretty jazzed to be the inaugural group to 'christen the stage' and we truly hope this will pave the way for other groups to do the same."

Learning about the Innisfil Arts Council

Twenty-five community members attended the info session for the Innisfil Arts Council. With a theme of renew and grow, community members were invited to learn more about the volunteer-run community organization. The Council is seeking new members and volunteers to help the organization grow and support arts and culture events in Innisfil. Curious visitors ranged from artists to art lovers and community volunteers. Many connections were made and hopefully this will be the beginning of a renewed enthusiasm for the arts in Innisfil. Mayor Dollin was present and noted the importance of the Library as a driver and supporter of culture in Innisfil. Numerous participants commented that "this Library is the best" and "is truly the heart of the community".

COMMUNITY IN-REACH AND OUTREACH

Nantyr Shore Secondary School Visit

This month, two English as a Second Language (ESL) classes from Nantyr Shores Secondary School embarked on an educational field trip to the Lakeshore Branch of the Library. The purpose of the visit was to provide ESL learners with an immersive learning experience and enhance their familiarity with the resources available in a Library setting. To begin the visit, Library Staff toured the students throughout the space, highlighting areas of interest such as the Troy Scott Community Fridge, EarlyON resources, Seed Library and the Library of Things. Students were excited to learn that they could borrow video games, as well as board games and gardening tools.

After the tour, students headed into the HackLAB to create customized bag tags using Inkscape and the laser cutter. This group was extremely engaged throughout the design process and enjoyed watching the laser cut out their final products. At the end of the visit, one student approached Library Staff to share that this was the first time he'd ever been to a Library. He shared, "When my teacher told us we were coming to the Library, I thought it would be terrible. I don't want boring books but this place is good. I like the video games and the cutting space (HackLAB). I will be back again!"

Since this visit, four students have returned weekly to use the HackLAB and complete their volunteer service hours.

School and Child Care Centre Outreach

This spring we were able to offer Library visits to local schools and child care centers for special events and storytimes. We attended events at Alcona Glen Elementary School and Cookstown Central Public School to share Library resources as well as activities to help little ones get ready for kindergarten. Staff handed out frisbees and brochures to let families know about upcoming programs and events. We attended Goodfellow Public School's 50th Anniversary and Lake Simcoe Public School's Community Event as well. These events are a great way to connect with families in the community and share information and resources, as well as highlight programs and items available to borrow with a Library card, like our robots, storytime kits, toy kits, and Library of Things. We often see children who recognize staff from Library programs and they love to come and share how excited they are to start school and how much they love Library programs.

The Library visited local child care centres Quiet Waters Montessori Academy, Innisfil Montessori, Treasure Garden Childcare Centre, and Eh to Zed Preschool Canada. Additionally, two preschool classes from Simcoe Child Care Services walked to our Lakeshore branch for storytime visits. The children and child care providers all enjoy the thirty minutes of stories, rhymes, and songs, and often try to convince the visiting programmer to stay longer!

Library visiting the 50th Anniversary Celebration at Goodfellow P.S.

> **Build UP** our reputation as a trusted community asset

OUR STORIES INNISFIL
Cookstown Agricultural Society

Thanks to a generous donation from the Cookstown Agricultural Society, the *Our Stories Innisfil* database now features 122 new photos and documents, primarily from the 1990s, showcasing countless memories of parades, fall fairs, and competitions that took place on the Cookstown Fairgrounds as well as right in the heart of downtown Cookstown.

These images are an important documentation of Cookstown's past, particularly in preserving memory of what the Fairgrounds looked like before the construction of the Cookstown Branch of the Library, as well as keeping a record of the Cookstown Agricultural Society's own history and membership. The Society has been a long-time supporter and valued partner of the Library, and it is a great privilege to be entrusted with the preservation of these materials.

Both the Society and the Library are excited to share these records with the Innisfil community and beyond, and promotion has already begun on the *Our Stories* social media pages on Facebook and Instagram.

Tractor parade on the Cookstown Fairgrounds, 1997

LIBRARY OF THINGS

Strategy and Planning

A committee was struck to create an organized plan for the Libraries collection of non-traditional items and equipment, known as the Library of Things [LoT]. The Committee is made up of Librarians from the Collections, Library Services, Programming, and Creative Making and Discovery departments, and their first task was to develop a Library of Things Strategy (see Appendix B) to guide decisions around the collection.

The LoT collection is organized into six categories for ease of management, and cataloguing and discoverability purposes:

- Coding and Robots
- Assistive Devices
- Lendable Tech
- Digital Media Equipment
- Toys and Instruments
- Outdoor and Leisure

The primary goals of the LoT collection are to enable access to the Library's various services and programs, and to support ongoing independent learning. The Committee is reviewing the Library's current holdings, and will determine if any of the items/equipment are at the end of their usable life and require replacement or deselection, as well as considering the addition of new items. They are also looking for opportunities to add books to kits, or otherwise make connections to the Library's collection. Future tasks will include working with the Communications Team to develop a promotional strategy, and to make the LoT collection browsable in the branches.

MORE eBOOKS

Cantook Station French Language ebook Platform

In May, the Library launched a new French language ebook platform, Cantook Station. The platform offers access to over 9,000 digital books and audiobooks in French, for all audiences, including well-known Québecois and European authors as well as translations of popular English-language titles. It is available both through a web browser or the app Aldiko Next. The platform is entirely managed by Ontario Library Service (OLS), who also selects all of the content. The Library pays an annual subscription fee for access.

Due to the loss of the rotating multilingual collection formerly offered through the County, the Library is trying to increase our multilingual offerings in our digital ebooks, particularly for an adult audience. Cantook Station, along with new French, Spanish, Russian, and Portuguese titles added last year to cloudLibrary, the Library's primary ebook platform, are ways the Library is providing material to engage with these audiences.

> Raise **UP** the Library's identity as an innovative hub

COMMUNITY HACKLAB PROJECTS
Creativity in the HackLAB Saves the Day

Library Staff continue to see customers using the HackLAB space and equipment for a wide variety of purposes, from creating custom art projects to solving a problem. This month, an avid HackLAB user had a problem. While installing a new door lock, he'd drilled a hole that was too big and realized that his door was not thick enough to complete the project. He reached out to Library Staff with an idea to 3D print a plate that could help build out the lock and make it usable. Working with Staff, he created a design in TinkerCAD, a free 3D design website, and then was able to print the item on the 3D printer using the highest quality print.

After the installation, he shared that "the fancy fingerprint door locks I bought only work with doors that are 6mm thicker than my doors. I discovered this *after* drilling the larger doorknob holes that they also need. Quite a pickle. But solved with the plates you printed for me! Thanks for saving the day! The HackLAB staff are the best!"

The finished project, complete with 3D printed plate.

COOKSTOWN BRANCH REFRESH

Children's Area

New shelving was installed at the Cookstown Branch in order to reorganize the children's area and collections. The DVD collection was moved to the last row of the adult collection to create the space needed to expand the footprint of the children's collection. To add the new shelving, Staff had to shift tens of thousands of books - the entire collection at this Branch, including adult materials. This was done over the course of two days, a month apart. The new furniture is mobile and easy to move, and will allow children's programs to be run in the Library space, instead of the Community Room where they were previously held. Running storytimes and other programs in the Library space means children and caregivers will be surrounded by books, creating a high amount of exposure to various displays at all reading levels and building comfort with the Library space, setting children up for a lifetime of reading.

The new layout and shelves also create the much needed shelf space for faceout display of children's materials, something which has proven to be highly effective with enticing children to select their own books. Proper display stands will be added soon, ensuring materials are not damaged and are merchandised to the Library's standards.

Tables and Chairs

Some public seating and tables were at the end of their life, with visible damage, and were replaced this month. The large wooden table was replaced with two smaller tables, allowing more flexibility with configurations. The lounge seating was also replaced, and side tables added which double as a laptop stand. The built-in benches on either side of the fireplace were converted into storage, and cushions added to make them a more inviting place to sit.

INNISFIL IS FOR THE BIRDS
Centennial Park Bird Walk with Kevin Shackleton

Library programming went outside with a fully packed Bird Walk on World Migratory Bird Day. It was a perfect day for bird watching: a warm, spring morning with the sun shining, just a light breeze, and the birds chirping away! Birding expert, Kevin Shackleton led us through Centennial Park in Innisfil informing participants about birding apps to download in order to detect the species and pointing out certain ones we saw and heard. He also shared a bird species list to hand out to participants so they could check off ones they saw during the walk.

Participants from all walks of life joined us, including couples, singles, and families. Many participants came equipped with binoculars and cameras. They asked lots of questions and there was some great discussion about various species of birds and the kinds of set-ups people had in their yards like bird feeders, etc. Participants were delighted to see orioles, Canada geese and their goslings, red-winged blackbirds and many other species. Many of the participants shared how thankful they were for this event, and that they are so excited for the next bird walk.

Birds play an important role in the ecosystem. With our emphasis on developing pollinator gardens and educating the public, there is a growing demand for hands-on engagement opportunities regarding nature and conservation issues.

Light **UP** pathways to personal & professional growth

SENIOR OUTREACH

Meeting Seniors Where They Are

May was filled with invaluable visits to our neighbours and community partners; serving seniors where they live and gather outside of the Library spaces.

- **Coffee Chat at Sandycove Acres**
  Library Staff attended the monthly Sandycove Acres Coffee Chat to talk about all the Seniors activities available through the Library. After the presentation, many attendees came up to the Library's table to ask questions and collect tip sheets for our databases and digital service offerings. One attendee shared that "the Library has saved me these last two years", and continued to share how much she loves Tinkershops, and our other adult programs. An estimated 125 Sandycove residents were in attendance, and many participants filled out Library card sign-up paperwork on the way out.

- **YMCA Innisfil Silver Club – Terracotta Pot Painting**
  Library Staff guided the group members through a perfect springtime craft with terracotta pot painting. Each participant thought carefully about how the painted pot would fit in and suit their garden. This activity provided a supportive environment for seniors to connect with each other over shared interests; including complementing their artistic skills and sharing tips for gardening.

- **Lakeside Retirement – Watercolour Painting**
  Staff at Lakeside Retirement Home were very supportive, and made sure to help all of their residents who had registered by assisting them down to the program area. The programmers had anticipated going through the steps of a painting all together, but the group was more interested in doing their own thing and exploring the medium. Most participants were fairly new to watercolour, except for one who used to paint all the time, so she was happy to get back into it. The group was so focused it was often pretty quiet, but at the end everyone had lovely paintings and shared how much fun they had. A few of them asked when we would be back as we had really made their day!

SUPPORTING LIFELONG LEARNING
Crafting for Humanity

Throughout the month of May Crafting for Humanity saw high attendance numbers, with many registrants on the waitlist. Across 3 program sessions: 24 Library customers were registered, and there were an additional 20 customers on the waitlisted.

In support of the Yarn Bombing art display to raise awareness for DeafBlind Ontario, we ran a session devoted to crocheting 12 inch squares. Participants were given a variety of patterns, ranging in skill levels and designs, so that everyone could pick one that they liked to create a square to donate. Most of the group picked a textured heart design, as they loved the idea of including texture in a project that is to raise awareness for DeafBlind Ontario. Everyone in this group had crocheted before, so some patrons just needed a bit of help reading the pattern or figuring out a certain stitch, but overall everyone was chatting happily while creating their squares. They talked about other programs they are enjoying at the Library, other craft projects they are working on, and other times they like to meet up and craft together. One participant even did a little dance and sang a little happy song when she realized she was understanding the pattern and could see the heart starting to form in her work!

Later in the month, two members of Bridget's Bunnies visited the session to crochet bunnies and talk about how their organization helps support families going through pregnancy and infant loss with their comfort kits. We had full registration, and a few of the ladies took extra materials home to make more than one bunny. There was lots of great discussion while participants crocheted, and some were asking how they could get more involved with the organization, and perhaps offer their own "bunny making" events. We will definitely want to run this program again and get more bunnies donated to their comfort kits!

Digital Literacy Training for Seniors

Our community's need for technical assistance seems to be increasing. Our Confidently Computing sessions regularly have full registration. These programs focus on developing the basics of computer skills, and in May we offered *Intro to Computers.* This cohort of participants were novices, and jokingly referred to themselves as "Computer Experts". The skills gained were all about the fine motor skills required to click, double click, and, click & drag their way around a desktop computer. The relaxed environment of these programs allow programming Staff to adapt the program to the needs and interests of its participants. Since some of the participants were interested in learning more about tablets, we brought out a few of our programming iPads to show how to send and receive iMessages. The development of technology confidence in our regular users is evident; a long-time Library program attendee spent some one-on-one time sharing their tips and tricks for using a calendar app on their tablet with a newer participant.

Tech Help is our one-on-one technology support session, offered at both the Lakeshore and Cookstown branches. The audience for this popular program is primarily seniors, and each session brings unique questions, problems and solutions. Sessions are often filled quickly, with long waitlists.

During one session, an attendee asked about text on her phone, wondering if when typing on her phone, she needed to keep the text from overflowing over into the margin (as one would when writing with pen and paper). As a result, she was adding line breaks every time she got close to the edge of the text message's input box. This was an interesting example of how many individuals try to take what they know about the physical world into the digital realm. She was also asking about storage and making e-transfers. We were able to give her the assistance she needed. She mentioned a couple of times how silly she felt for asking these questions but we assured her that there are no silly questions. Interactions like this demonstrate the need for building technological confidence in our community. Ultimately, Library Staff are able to support our customers in their digital learning journeys, ensuring our seniors community members have the skills they need in the digital world.

In an unusual Tech Help session, the attendee discovered she was receiving messages on behalf of an American country radio station on her Facebook Messenger app. Staff discovered that she was mistakenly added as an admin for the radio station's Facebook page resulting in numerous notifications and messages intended for the radio station. Fortunately, we were able to help her regain control by removing her as an admin, preventing any potential mishaps for the radio station. This incident highlighted the value of our library in resolving unique situations and providing the necessary support.

SPRING AUTHOR SERIES WRAP-UP

Jessica Hamilton and Catherine Hernandez

In May the <u>Spring Author Series</u> concluded, following talks from Gail Sweeney in March, Jessica Hamilton in April, and Catherine Hernandez in May. Across these 3 events, 75 attendees got to dig into some interesting books!

In April, Jessica Hamilton joined us from Orillia to chat about her thriller, *What You Never Knew*. Jessica was delightful, and recounted the many ups and downs of the publishing world, and what it took to get this book to readers. As the story goes, the manuscript for this book helped her snag a literary agent, but after shopping it around to multiple publishers, she was on the brink of dropping the novel for good, before being picked up by Crooked Lane Books. By the time she found a publisher, she had already finished a draft of her second book, which she was then able to also have published by Crooked Lane Books shortly after the first. She also discussed how the novel was a way for her to come to terms with being estranged from her mother, and get out some of the thoughts and feelings that could not otherwise be easily expressed. Attendees were interested to find out more about how the novel's structure came to be, and what makes a good ghost story!

Jessica Hamilton reads a passage.

In May, award-winning author Catherine Hernandez Zoomed in to give us an insightful and wide ranging author talk. She shared many details about her writing process for her novel *The Story of Us*, and how her goal was to focus on the story her ancestors wanted her to tell, and have that process reflected in the narrative. In her book, the narrator is the protagonist's unborn child, who relates to their future mother's life through the memories of their maternal ancestors. It makes for an affecting narrative, which many participants connected with. During the Q&A period we were able to dig a little deeper into Catherine's motivation for writing the book, and how she feels about the representation of her characters. She was very generous with her answers, and I believe everyone left with much to think about.

EARLY LITERACY FUN
Drop-in Family Storytimes

In May, the Library has continued to offer Drop-in Family Storytimes at the Cookstown branch on Wednesdays, Stroud branch on Fridays, Lakeshore branch on Saturdays, as well as starting our outdoor storytimes that rotate to different parks around Innisfil after the May long weekend. The drop-in format allows families the flexibility to participate in Library programs without pre-registering and to attend different locations depending on what works best for them. These storytimes are often well attended, with an average of 20-30 people at each one, with our Saturday Lakeshore storytimes sometimes attracting more than 50 people into the Children's area! We have some families and home child care centres that drive to different locations to participate every week, and they tell us that the Library is an important part of their weekly routine.

Families often tell us how they heard about our Drop-in Storytimes from other family members or friends, our brochure or other registered programs. Some families visited our Toddler Tuesday storytime at Tanger Outlet Mall, then went to the Cookstown branch the next day to get Library cards and attend Family Storytime there! We have some participants that attend Drop-In Storytimes with their daycares on one day, then with their parents on Saturdays, and are very comfortable in the space and with the Staff even though they are very young. For our first Outdoor Storytime at Town Square, we had almost 40 participants join us for stories, singing, and dancing. Lots of families came up to say thank you before they headed into the Lakeshore branch to explore and pick out some materials to borrow.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT & TRAINING

Mental Health First Aid

All Staff attended a Mental Health First Aid training course offered by St. John's Ambulance. The course delivered material related to recognizing stressors and mental health crises in colleagues and others. Mental health supports continue to be a priority to ensure that Library Staff have access to the appropriate resources, training and support systems for mental well-being.

APPENDIX A:

Level UP! **Communications Insights**

Media Outreach & Social Media Response

DATE PUBLISHED	NEWS OUTLET	TITLE
May 4, 2023	Simcoe.com	Bird Walks and Author Talks: The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library suggests 5 things to do in May
May 8, 2023	Barrie Today	'Showcase our town pride': Pitch-In Day returning to Innisfil
May 11, 2023	Simcoe.com	Innisfil holding annual Pitch-In Day community cleanup on May 13
May 14, 2023	Simcoe.com	Award-winning Innisfil Farmers' Market returning to Stroud, and many favourite vendors will be there
May 15, 2023	Bradford Today	Keep it clean: Innisfil residents come together for Pitch-In Day
May 19, 2023	Innisfil Today	Neighbourhood Nights returning to Innisfil
May 19, 2023	Innisfil Today	Innisfil Library hosting arts, storytelling events
May 23, 2023	Innisfil Today	Innisfil Arts Council invites you to tonight's meet and greet
May 25, 2023	Orillia Today	Uber remains in the driver's seat in Innisfil despite some bumps
May 25, 2023	Innisfil Today	Dairy, eggs now being accepted for Troy Scott Community Fridges

May 27, 2023	Innisfil Today	[Gallery: Innisfil Toastmasters Club members share their stories](#)
May 30, 2023	Innisfil Today	[Neighbourhood Nights begins this evening in Ward 2](#)
May 31, 2023	Innisfil Today	[Tanger Outlets donates $3K to Troy Scott Community Fridges](#)

Facebook Insights (May 1 to 31, 2023)

FOLLOWERS	# OF POSTS	TOTAL ENGAGEMENT	TOTAL IMPRESSIONS
3,603 (Followers) 3,105 Page Likes	66 during this period	885 engagements (769 reactions, 65 shares, 51 comments)	Posts earned 28.9K impressions over this period (number of times our posts have entered a person's screen)

Top Organic Post (based on reach):
Date, May 17, 2023 23.6K Reach

Innisfil Idealab & Library
Published by Hootsuite · May 17 at 2:00 PM · 🌐

A big shoutout and thank you to Foodland Stroud for filling our fridge! 🥚 🧀
Thanks also to Mr. Delivery for getting the items here! 🚚
Foodland Stroud challenges other local grocery stores to do the same. 🔗

The Troy Scott Community Fridges are a neighbours helping neighbours initiative to help feed #Innisfil. Please bring food donations to our Lakeshore or Cookstown Branch to support community food security for your neighbours.
Lea... See more

Twitter Insights (May 1 to 31, 2023)

FOLLOWERS	# OF TWEETS	TOTAL ENGAGEMENT	TWEET IMPRESSIONS
1,539	47 during this period	68 engagements (44 likes, 17 retweets, 7 quote tweets, 0 reply) 17 Mentions	10.4K impressions over this period (number of times users saw our tweets)

Top Organic Post (based on reach):
Top Tweet **earned 715 impressions**

Smile Cookies are back from May 1-7 🍪

Visit the **#Cookstown** **@TimHortons** at 48 Queen Street W., or 4191 Innisfil Beach Rd. in **#Thornton** and all proceeds of cookies purchased will be donated to the **@InnisfilideaLAB** Cookstown Branch & the Thornton Branch of the **@EssaLibrary** pic.twitter.com/aIrXjMNHBW

makes a difference.

100% of proceeds go to local charities & community groups.

Instagram Insights (May 1 to 31, 2023)

FOLLOWERS	# OF POSTS	TOTAL LIKES & REACH	TOTAL COMMENTS
1,944	63 during this period	7,862 accounts reached. 1,384 likes.	19 comments in total on content posted during this period

Top Post (based on engagement): May 7, 2023 446 Reach
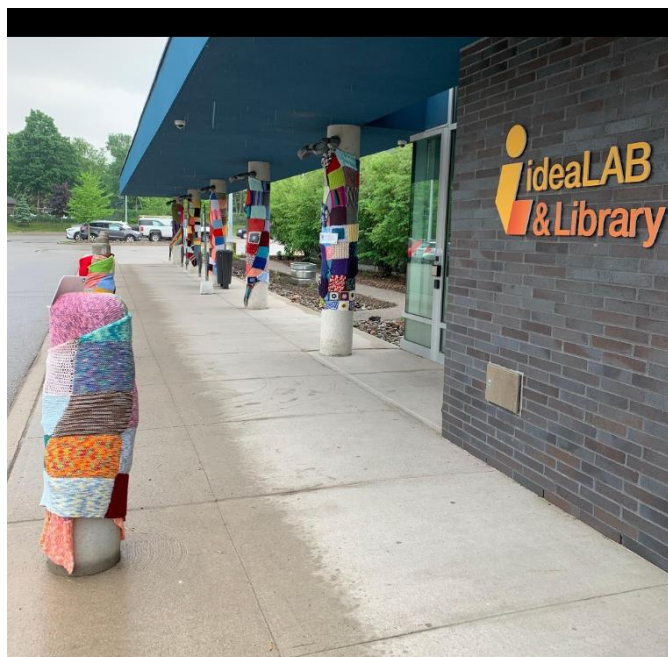
innisfilidealab

innisfilidealab DeafBlind Ontario Services is participating in a global YarnBombing initiative to raise awareness about deaf-blindness and they need your help! Simply knit or crochet a 20x20 cm yarn square and drop-it off at the Lakeshore Branch by May 16.

New to knitting or have always wanted to try this craft? Learn the basics of knitting with Laura: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RyZMDryu_Qs

#DblYarnBombing2023 #yarnbombing #deafblindawareness
3w

View insights   Boost post

Liked by barriepubliclibrary and 34 others
MAY 7

Top Reel (based on engagement): May 26, 2023 2.7K Reach
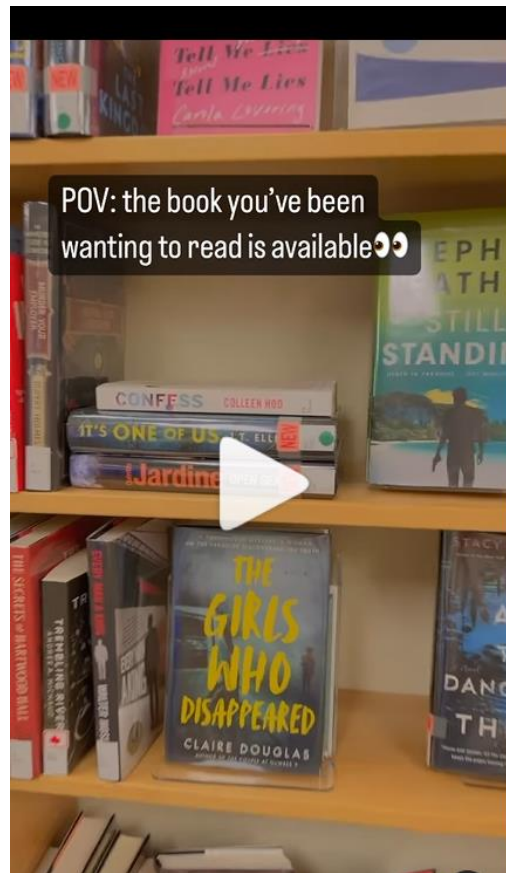
APPENDIX B:

Library of Things Strategy

INTRODUCTION & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library provides access to a collection of items beyond the traditional formats of print, audio, and video. The Library of Things enables people to extend their learning beyond the walls of the Library and Programs, and helps to combat inequities of access that arise from socio-economic factors.

The Library of Things is not a static collection, and must grow and adapt to the changing needs of its users and the evolving Programs and Services offered by the Library.

The Library holds the following principles and guiding documents as priorities in the development and implementation of the Library of Things Strategy and related actions:

- The goals set out in the Library's Strategic Plan will advise selection and management of the Library of Things collection
- We are committed to the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion, and the Library's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Policy will advise planning
- We actively support the development of strong print literacy and digital literacy skills
- We follow a human-centred approach that prioritizes user behaviours and needs
- The Library is committed to sustainability and minimizing our environmental impact

STRATEGIC GOALS & ACTIONS

Build a collection that meets the needs of customers and supports the Library's services and programs	1. Develop a long term plan for growing the Library of Things Collection 2. Create a standardized procedure for evaluating new items before adding them to the Collection 3. Conduct an inventory of the current Collection and assess the value of these items in meeting the Library's goals

Make it easy for customers to access and borrow items in the Collection	1. Develop a standardized cataloguing and processing procedure for adding new items 2. Create a promotional plan to inform customers about the items available and how to access them 3. Make instructions and tutorials on using items in the Collection readily available to users

Ensure Staff have the skills and knowledge necessary to manage and promote the collection	1. Develop a Staff training plan 2. Make resources that support the Collection easily available to Staff

Municipal Council Report

May 10, 2023 Council Meeting
- [Watch the meeting](#).
- The Library Board delivered a presentation highlighting some achievements and the completion of the economic and social impact study. The presentation was well-received and the Mayor noted that this Board has Council's full support.
- Amanda Fellows delivered a presentation regarding the Stopping Harassment and Abuse by Local Leaders Act - Bill 5 [Women of Ontario Say No.](#) Council endorsed the Bill and expressed support for it.
- Town Staff delivered a presentation about the Innisfil Beach Park Implementation Plan. Read the full staff report [DSR-058-23 Innisfil Beach Park Implementation Plan PKS374](#) Decision making on this item was deferred until May 24, 2023.
- The plan to consolidate Fire Services between the Town of Innisfil and Bradford West Gwillimbury was dissolved. [DSR-071-23 Fire Consolidation Update](#)
- Plans for the 2023 summer season at Innisfil Beach Park were updated, [DSR-059-23 Innisfil Beach Park (IBP) 2023 Seasonal Update](#) Highlights to include:
    - Creation of a permanent dog beach
    - Dogs will be permitted in most municipal parks
    - The Pride crosswalk will be removed, but installation of a new landscape feature including a flagpole dedicated to the pride flag will be installed in May
    - Pop-up shops and Music in the Park will return
    - Sierra's Chair, accessible beach wheelchair) will once again be available
- Proclamations for the month of May included: International Day Against Homophobia & Transphobia (May 17), National Public Works Week (May 21-27), and National AccessAbility Week (May 28-June 3).

May 24, 2023 Council Meeting
- [Watch the meeting](#).
- A number of delegations, presentations, and petitions were received by Council from members of the public, including:
    - Rotary Club of Innisfil presented to Council about their Peace Pole initiative. The Lakeshore Branch is a location for the installation of one of the artistic poles. [Rotary Club Peace Poles Presentation](#)
    - Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee delivered their [annual presentation,](#) spoke about the Breaking Down Barriers awareness program and highlighted Magaretta (Champion) Park as an all-inclusive park, with barrier free amenities.
    - Khuram Tunio re: a petition to reinstate the use of BBQs at Innisfil Beach Park.
    - Michael Hayes re: street light installation on Limerick Street
    - Donna Orsatti re: support for the Innisfil Beach Park Implementation Plan

Municipal Council Report

- The following community members were appointed to the Electoral Engagement Advisory Committee (EEAC):
    - Steve Fishman
    - Karen Hazlett
    - Juli Lin
    - Anne Smith
    - Dana Stott
    - Bill Van Berkel
    - LeAnn Lloyd
- The following community members were appointed to the Ward Boundary Review Ad-Hoc Committee (WBRAHC):
    - Rob Nicol
    - Donna Orsatti
    - Emma Perry
    - Bill Van Berkel
    - Paul Wardlaw
- Proclamations for the month of June included: Innisfil Pride Month, National Indigenous History Month and National Deafblind Awareness Month.
- Council revisited the Innisfil Beach Park Implementation Plan that was deferred from the previous meeting. There was discussion surrounding the addition of another road in and out of the park. A motion to amend the recommendation to request Staff to revisit the road, the motion was defeated. The final decision was to approve the 20 year plan and to authorize Staff to commence the design for Phase 1.
- Council carefully considered the Innisfil Transit - 2022 Results and Update report which included trip and ridership data over the past year. 2022 saw over 94 000 rides with Innisfil Transit, and it was recommended that the partnership with Uber continue. The motion to continue the partnership with Uber was carried, as were amendments to the motion to include research of a transit hub in Cookstown and to undertake an additional transit survey as a component of the Transit Master Plan.
- Council received 2022 Final Operating & Capital Results
- Council received an Orbit Development Application Status Update outlining the details of a series of development applications received by Town staff, including:
    - 1. Application for Site Plan Control for the proposed GO Station on lands municipally known as 1350 6th line (SP-2022-024);
    - 2. Application for Site Plan Control for a mixed-use development project on lands municipally known as 1214 6th line (SP-2023-003);
    - 3. Application for Draft Plan of Subdivision to create 7 Blocks and 2 streets on lands north and west of the 6th Line/GO Transit track/line (D12-2023-001); and
    - 4. Application for a Redline Revision to a Draft Plan Approval on lands north and east of the 6th Line/GO transit track/line (D12-2013-002).
- Deputy Mayor Fowler provided a notice of motion for consideration at the June 7 Council meeting to recommend the refreshment trailer (food truck) by-laws be revisited to allow for more trailers and more locations.

Municipal Council Report

News from the Community

- [New awards honour Black, multicultural businesses in Simcoe County](#)
- [Innisfil Fashion Market season kicks off Mother's Day weekend](#)
- [Firefighters wanted! Local town council approves 20 new hires](#)
- [South Simcoe police opening their doors this weekend](#)
- ['No bad blood': Innisfil council snuffs out fire department merger](#)
- [Town introduces community benefits charge](#)
- [Move to Give campaign raises $74K for YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka](#)
- [DMZ Innisfil launches new programs to transform local businesses](#)
- [Keep it clean: Innisfil residents come together for Pitch-In Day](#)
- [Innisfil supports bill to end harassment from councillors](#)
- [Innisfil girl to be sworn in as honorary paramedic next week](#)
- [Innisfil resident heading to Italy for inline hockey's World Cup](#)
- [Innisfil begins development of three-year economic plan](#)
- [Dairy, eggs now being accepted for Troy Scott Community Fridges](#)
- [Uber still in the driver's seat in Innisfil](#)
- [Town seeking feedback on strategic plan](#)
- ['It's difficult': South Simcoe police in need of more officers](#)
- ['Less wiggle room': Innisfil finds itself in the red for 2022](#)
- [Triton Music Ensemble's triumph 'is for the entire community'](#)
- [Music festival helps RVH Foundation to the tune of $16K](#)
- [No timeline for new GO station in Innisfil](#)
- ['Broad strokes': Council OKs Innisfil Beach Park revitalization](#)
- [Innisfil Community Foundation funds ongoing palliative support with Hospice Simcoe](#)
- ['Really fun': School project sees Innisfil student open another Little Free Library](#)
- [Award-winning Innisfil Farmers' Market returning to Stroud, and many favourite vendors will be there](#)
- ['They get to tell their stories': Innisfil's Brian Everett captures his memories in book created with Senior Wish Association](#)
- [South Simcoe municipalities may be asked to kick in funding for Museum on the Boyne](#)
- [Q&A with 'The Cuban' film director Sergio Navarretta and why he loves Innisfil](#)
- ['Love for All, Hatred for None': Ahmadiyya Muslim Women's Association hosts interfaith symposium in Cookstown](#)

News from the County and Province: Upper-tier Municipality Review

- [Simcoe County up for review following Peel Region break up](#)
- ['We need to deliver a clear message': Simcoe County council responds to proposed Ontario legislation](#)
- ['High-growth pressures': Simcoe County among upper-tier municipalities to go under Ontario's microscope](#)
- [Region of Peel to be dissolved by province, Brampton and Mississauga and Caledon to become stand-alone municipalities](#)

Innisfil

JHSC Meeting Agenda

MEETING DATE:	Thursday, May 18, 2023	
TIME:	1:00PM	
LOCATION:	Ops Meeting Room 2 and Teams	
CO-CHAIRS:	Management Co-Chair – Eric Chudzinski; Worker Co-Chair Richard Rivet	
MINUTES:	Jennifer Miyasaki	
ATTENDANCE	Nick Ayers, Eric Chudzinski, Jennifer Miyasaki, Richard Rivet, Ken Schuyler, Jennifer Sheremeto, Paul Tomaszewski, Sierra Warren	
REGRETS	Kristi Williams	

Item	Agenda Item	Lead	Item Details	ACTION & NOTES
1.	Call Meeting to Order	Co-Chair	- Time – opened	- Meeting started at 1:00 p.m.
2.	Approval of Previous Minutes	Co-Chair	2023.04.20 JHSC Meeting Agenda Minutes Draft.pdf (Desktop, Web, Mobile)	- Jen S. motioned to approve the minutes of the previous meeting. - Seconded by Paul T. - All in favour; **Motion Carried**.
3.	JHSC members	Co-Chair	02.09.23 JHSC Members February 2023 (Desktop, Web, Mobile)	- No changes
4.	Workplace Inspections WHIMIS LOTO	Co-Chair	Roundtable discussions	**Richard** – Potential hazard noted: plow wings storage – unsure if the method of storage is safe **Action:** EC/RR Will review storage of wings and assess hazard/risk to staff **Jennifer M** – All facilities were inspected on May 1. Minor deficiency noted; the issue is being rectified. **Nick** – Inspections are planned for the following week. Recently trialed a remote-operated flail mower and believe an SOP is being drafted. EC confirmed this is correct. **Paul** – Completed inspections; item noted: First aid kits' supplies are depleted; is it easier to purchase a new kit,

				or source supplies and replenish? Also need to determine who owns this responsibility.
				<mark>**Action:** Determine whose responsibility it is to replenish the kits – EC to confirm</mark>
				Re: Ladder stickers – reach out to Jen S. to obtain
				Kristi – Absent – Inspections not yet completed for May – will try to complete next week
				Sierra - Jen S. joined Sierra on her inspections; nothing needed to be addressed; noted that at Ec Dev, a blind that had fallen; it appears they were not properly installed; paint cans in the kitchen at Rizzardo – need to be stored properly; recommendation for Ec Dev janitor closet/supply room: needs to be tidied and have shelves, racks and a curtain across the doorway.
				Jen S. inquired about inspections at camp locations; need to determine obligation/scope of inspections (e.g. Centennial Park washrooms; IBP building behind soccer pitch)
				Eric – Re: Inspection Sheet - a new section under security heading re: doors – should ensure they latch/are not propped open for safety reasons
5.	SOP's Corporate Policies	Co-Chair	Any updates for discussion?	- SOPs continue - Respectful Workplace Policy being updated – Eric will send to Committee for feedback
6.	Workplace Incidents & Accidents	Co-Chair	Report on last month's accidents (April 2023)	- 2 incidents in April; minor incident in which first aid was required; another incident involving a vehicle reversing in a parking lot – no injuries
7.	Budget & Training	Co-Chair	1. Budget (status update) 2. Member Certifications	1. Within budget 2. Sierra completed Part 1; Part 2 for Sierra and Kristi will be scheduled for the end of the year; Jen S. will have refresher in July.

8.	JHSC Other Business	All Members	1. JHSC BBQ (status update)	1. 140 people have RSVP'd; activities planning continues
			2. Ergonomics	2. Just a reminder to ensure your workspace, whether at home or in the office that you're using best practices to ensure better physical wellness and prevent MSDs or repetitive task injuries
			3. Respectful Workplace Policy updates	3. Eric will send out proposed changes for comment
			4. Question added to inspection under new heading Security: "Are exterior doors secured from unauthorized entry (i.e. closing and latching, not propped open)	4. Eric advised earlier in the meeting that the inspection forms have a new section under the Security heading to ensure doors are being latched/not propped open.
			5. Naloxone in the Workplace Update/Risk Assessment	5. Legislation as of June 1, 2023, any workplace with at-risk staff are required to have naloxone kits in staff spaces Eric shared an opioid risk assessment form (survey); the JHSC review and completed it.
9.	ACTION ITEMS Follow up	Co-Chair	Review of Action items from April 20, 2023, meeting minutes.	- **ACTION:** Eric and Jen M will take Terms of Reference offline to review and decide on appropriate action(s). – Keep it as it for now – action closed - **ACTION:** Nick and Eric to work with Parks/Facilities Managers to determine purpose and requirements for CO/CO2 detectors at the IRC. – sensors require upgrading; sensors will be inspected every 6 months – keep this action open until some sensors are replaced – Eric and Nick to follow up on this – keep this action open until confirmed complete
10.	Close Meeting	Co-Chair	- Time enter of meeting closed.	- Meeting closed at 1:58.p.m.

INNISFIL PUBLIC LIBRARY STAFF REPORT

STAFF REPORT NO.	**LIB-06-2023**
DATE:	**June 19, 2023**
TO:	**Innisfil Public Library Board**
FROM:	**Erin Scuccimarri, CEO**
SUBJECT:	**Library Trends Report**

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RECOMMENDATION:

THAT Staff Report LIB-06-2023 Library Trends Report dated June 19, 2023 be received as information.

INTRODUCTION:

Staying on top of both community and industry trends is crucial for public libraries to remain relevant, responsive, and forward-thinking. By being aware of emerging trends, we can better meet the needs and interests of our customers, and be proactive in our decision-making processes. Community trends can include changes in demographics, emerging interests, and evolving needs within the community. By being aware of community trends, the Library can anticipate future needs and plan accordingly, allowing us to better serve our customers. In addition to community trends, libraries also need to stay on top of industry trends, such as changes in technology, library design, and evolving service models.

Through an annual trends report, Library Staff will address and analyze trends and identify priority areas for Library Staff and Board actions. By anticipating future needs and staying up-to-date on emerging trends, we can continue to serve as important community spaces, provide valuable resources and programming, and meet the evolving needs of our community.

Using the Library's Strategic Plan as a guide, we have identified six emerging trends. This document will serve as a road map for future planning and will identify actions to achieve the goals set out in the Library's Strategic Plan.

TRENDS ANALYSIS:

Trend 1: Intellectual Freedom

Libraries face increasingly difficult choices in their responsibility to provide a range of viewpoints that allow individuals to develop their own critical understanding of a topic. Librarians have combated attempts by community members to restrict the ideas in their collections or programs for decades, but in recent years this adherence to allowing controversial and diverse thought has increasingly collided with the values of inclusion and diversity for which libraries strive. Concerns have been made considerably more public in an era of social media.

Our Response:

1. Policy reviews: Conduct comprehensive reviews of existing policies to ensure they align with the principles of intellectual freedom and reflect the evolving needs of our community.
2. Professional development: Provide relevant training to staff and Board members to equip them with the knowledge and skills to advocate for intellectual freedom and defend against censorship.
3. Communications plan: Develop a plan to educate the community about the importance of intellectual freedom and the role of public libraries in providing access to diverse materials and programming.

Trend 2: Growing Community

In 2011, Innisfil had a population of 33,079, representing an increase of 6.1% from 2006 (slightly higher than the national average growth). Innisfil is currently forecasting high levels of growth. By 2031, the population is expected to grow by 70% compared to 2011 (over 58,000 residents). This projected population growth presents a key opportunity to create shared spaces that relate to the Town's educational, recreational, cultural, social, and economic needs while cost-effectively sharing certain spaces aligned with the emerging population hubs. Predictably, Innisfil will be far more diverse in the future and will likely have a younger than average adult population with more children. According to the 2021 Census data, Innisfil already has more people aged 0-14 than 65+. Typically, these demographics are heavy users of library facilities and services. As the community grows, so too will the need for shops, schools, community centres, infrastructure, and, of course, libraries. If the Library doesn't grow in proportion to the population, it will not be able to accommodate the new and existing residents, which will have severe social and economic implications. The relationship between the population and the amount of library space has been thoroughly studied and regularly reviewed.

Numerous authorities (Administrators of Rural and Urban Public Libraries of Ontario, Ontario Library Service, etc.) have established a standard that for every person there should be 0.7 square feet (ft^2) of traditional library space, and 0.3 ft^2 of cultural space, for a total of 1.0 ft^2 per person for library facilities. In 2021, Innisfil had a population of approximately 41,415 residents and 36,571 square feet of library space, which equals approximately. 0.9 ft^2 per person. In 2051, the forecasted population is 86,850 people; if no additional space is built, there would only be 0.4 square feet/ person, or less than half of the allowance existing today. In order to meet and sustain the Library's strategic goals to make a fundamental difference in the economic, social vitality, educational, and cultural activities in the Town of Innisfil, the Library must plan for the addition of 50,279 square feet of space over the coming decades, as well as new locations to meet both current and future needs to be ready for the 2051 growth projections.

The challenges anticipated by the growth of the community are addressed through the most recent Facilities Master Plan. However, increasing Library square footage is a long term solution and the Library is already seeing pressures created by community growth. Some think, wrongly, that e-content and digital services have reduced the need for more space. Rather, digital content and services require more space as up to 25% of Ontarians do not have access to the internet and/or necessary devices at home or work. The 21st century public library program portfolio supports reading, digital and other literacies, school and college readiness, access, learning, employment, and use of government services, to name just a few. Crowding in the current branches will be the norm with the anticipated population growth; and Innisfil's current space-to-population ratio already registers low in comparison to its peers.

Our Response:

1. Space planning: Using the facilities master plan as a guide to ensure Library spaces can grow adequately in the community to meet current and future needs.
2. Needs assessment: Conduct regular assessments of the library's facilities and services to ensure they align with the changing demographics and evolving needs of the community.
3. Advocacy and partnerships: Advocate for adequate resources and partnerships to support the expansion of library facilities and services.

Trend 3: Pressure for Space by Outside Agencies

The role of public libraries as community hubs continues to grow as libraries tailor services to meet a wide range of community needs. As a result, there is a growing trend towards flexible, multifunctional spaces that house more than books.

Libraries are trusted sources of community and government information and provide vital services such as health clinics and emergency response centres.   Increasingly, libraries coordinate and partner with government, community organizations, schools, and the private sector to provide services that meet local community needs. Community and social service agencies are seeking access to the Library to establish a foothold in Innisfil. Hosting services at the Library allows various agencies the ability to connect directly with our residents, in their community. In a typical week, residents can connect with a variety of social service agencies including (but not limited to) CMHA, CONTACT affordable housing, SHIFT - a homelessness outreach program, Elizabeth Fry Society, YMCA Newcomer's Services and EarlyON programming, in addition to accessing food through the Troy Scott Community fridges. Increased traffic in the branches requires more staff time, and once community members in need enter the Library, they are connecting with our staff about a variety of other challenges they are experiencing.

With their community reach and reputation as a safe space, libraries have been shown to be effective in delivering a wide-variety of services and programs through partnership with outside agencies.

Our Response:

1. Flexible spaces: Design and adapt library spaces to accommodate diverse activities and functions, allowing for the hosting of community groups, social service agencies, and individuals.
2. Partnerships: Foster collaborations with government, community organizations, schools, and the private sector to deliver services that meet local community needs.
3. Resource allocation: Allocate resources to support the demand for multifunctional spaces and facilitate the provision of services through partnerships with outside agencies.

Trend 4: The Library of Things

Traditionally, libraries have primarily focused on providing access to books and other printed materials. However, with changing needs and evolving technology, libraries are expanding their collections to include a wide range of non-traditional items that customers can borrow. This trend reflects the growing recognition that libraries can play a role in providing access to resources beyond books. The Library of Things movement sees libraries offering an array of items such as tools, musical instruments, kitchen appliances, sports equipment, and even specialty items like sewing machines or virtual reality headsets. By updating the materials libraries include in their collections, they are adapting to the changing needs and interests of their communities, providing valuable resources that may not be easily accessible or affordable for everyone. The Library of Things trend promotes sharing, sustainability, and experiential learning, allowing customers to explore new hobbies, try out different technologies, and engage in hands-on experiences that enhance their learning and personal growth.

Our Response:

1. Strategy: Develop Library of Things Strategy and Goals to ensure the growth of the collection both meets community needs and Library strategic goals.
2. Needs assessment: Shape the existing Library of Things collection into one that meets the needs of customers and supports the Library's services and programs.
3. Storage and display: Plan for future Library of Things storage and display in current and future spaces to ensure usage and connection to programs and services.

Trend 5: Artificial Intelligence

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the development of computer systems or machines that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. AI technology aims to simulate human cognitive abilities, such as learning, reasoning, problem-solving, perception, and language understanding. In recent months, there has been an explosion in publicly accessible AI tools. Public libraries have long played a vital role in promoting digital literacy, and this role will become even more important as AI technology advances. Libraries can take the lead in educating the public about AI concepts, risks, and responsible use. In the coming years, in addition to digital literacy, community members will need to further develop critical thinking and media and information literacy skills related to AI use. Libraries are poised to help consumers use AI technology wisely. Developing media and information literacy skills helps individuals critically evaluate and verify the information they encounter, reducing the risk of falling for false or misleading information. AI systems can be biased due to the data they are trained on or the algorithms used. Such biases can be reflected in search engine results, social media feeds, and recommendation systems, potentially shaping individuals' opinions and beliefs. Media literacy empowers citizens to recognize and challenge these biases, ensuring they have a more nuanced understanding of the information they consume.

As AI technology becomes more prevalent, media and information literacy skills are essential for individuals to navigate the information landscape effectively, critically evaluate content, protect their privacy, and actively participate in democratic processes. These skills empower citizens to make informed decisions and engage responsibly in the digital age. The rapid growth of AI technology will require public libraries to adapt and evolve their services and expertise. Librarians will play a crucial role in assisting the public in understanding and using AI responsibly, while also addressing ethical considerations and promoting digital, information and media literacies in an AI-driven world.

Our Response:

1. Skill development and training: Library Staff will need to acquire new skills and knowledge related to AI technology to effectively assist customers. Staff will seek training programs or workshops to help stay up to date and enhance their ability to guide the public in navigating AI technologies responsibly.

2. Monitor AI trends and technologies: Staff will monitor the trends and new technologies that continue to develop, and will seek best practices in the areas of basic understanding AI algorithms, data privacy issues, applications of AI technology, and the ethical implications of AI.

Trend 6: Rising use of Digital Collections

With the rise of new digital formats over the last two decades, *some* physical mediums are predicted to become obsolete. Books are the oldest format, and will endure for many years to come and the physical collection in libraries will remain as a core library service; however, physical video and audio formats are quickly being replaced by online services. The pandemic increased the pace of obsolescence, with many people turning to paid streaming services (Netflix, Prime, Disney+) for quick and easy access to content from their own homes. Simultaneously, there was a rapid uptake of the Library's digital collection, which has since plateaued and shows no sign of falling to pre-pandemic levels, resulting in a new standard of usage and demand for these services, especially eBooks. Additionally, high-speed internet access is not distributed equally across Innisfil, with members of the population being unable to access basic Internet services, let alone streaming services. Our response must carefully balance the broader trends of increasing use of streaming services and ensuring that the community can access the resources purchased by the Library.

The shift to digital comes with several challenges for public libraries, and Innisfil is no exception. eBook purchasing models and the terms for loaning titles are restrictive, volatile, and unregulated. The result is inconsistent pricing and access, limiting our ability to provide access to the full range of titles available in the marketplace. The limited number of platforms available to libraries means we have very little (often none) input over the design and content, and are at the mercy of the companies that own and manage the services. As companies seek to add more content, quality is not necessarily a priority and it can be difficult or impossible for librarians to monitor and curate collections to ensure they meet our standards.

Our Response:

1. Monitor usage patterns and market developments: Staff continuously monitor usage patterns and stay informed about market developments in the digital content industry. This includes tracking trends in streaming services, digital publishing, and new technologies that may impact the Library's digital collection and services. This information can inform collection development decisions and help ensure the Library provides relevant and in-demand content to its customers.

2. Facilitate digital access: prioritize improving digital access by providing reliable and high-speed internet connectivity throughout library spaces. This includes offering Wi-Fi access to customers, ensuring the availability of computers and other devices for public use, facilitating remote access to digital resources, and exploring options for hot spot lending.
3. Advocacy: Work with other libraries and organizations to advocate for better terms and oversight of digital content, at a price that is fair to all parties involved. FOPL and OLA are currently [advocating for a province-wide digital Library](#).

OPTIONS/ALTERNATIVES:

No options/alternatives are identified as this report is being provided solely for informational purposes.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

While there are no financial considerations associated with this report; actions related to the Library response to these trends may require operational dollars and/or additional budgetary requests in the future.

CONCLUSION:

The annual trends report serves as a vital tool for our Library to adapt and thrive in an ever-changing landscape. This and future reports will be valuable tools to identify emerging trends, analyze their implications, and align our actions within the Library's Strategic Plan. Based on our findings, we recommend implementing several measures to enhance accountability and ensure effective progress towards our goals.

1. To ensure ongoing progress and accountability, we recommend Staff provide quarterly updates to the Board on our initiatives and the achievements made in relation to the identified trends. Regular reporting will also facilitate a culture of continuous improvement and enable us to respond swiftly to any shifts in the landscape.

2. We recommend incorporating the identified trends and corresponding actions into the CEO's review process. The CEO's evaluation should not only assess their performance in day-to-day operations but also their ability to adapt and respond to emerging trends. By tying the CEO's review to the identified trends, we reinforce the importance of forward-thinking and strategic decision-making in our organization's leadership.

3. Ensuring the Library response to emerging trends are aligned with the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan will also be important. The six trends identified in this document are not inclusive of all the actions the Library is undertaking in order to meet the goals laid out in the Library's Strategic Plan, however, the alignment of these trends and corresponding actions have been identified in Appendix A.

By implementing these measures, we will strengthen the Library's ability to anticipate and meet the evolving needs of our community. We will be well-positioned to leverage emerging trends, provide innovative services and resources, and remain at the forefront of the industry.

PREPARED BY
Kathryn Schoutsen
Manager of Engagement & Community Development

REFERENCE MATERIAL:

Innisfil ideaLAB & Library Strategic Plan

"Protecting Local Public Libraries across Ontario 2023 Pre-Budget Submission" issued by FOPL and OLA

Appendix A: Strategic Plan Alignment of Trends and Actions

	Trend 1 Intellectual Freedom	Trend 2 Growing Community	Trend 3 Space Pressure	Trend 4 Library of Things	Trend 5 Artificial Intelligence	Trend 6 Rise in Digital Use
Speak Up for Diversity & Inclusion	X	X	X			
Amplify voices of those who have been underrepresented.	X	X				
Ensure our spaces are barrier-free.		X	X			
Celebrate diversity in all we do.						
Capture community memory to reflect our diversity and our Indigenous past present future		X				
Open Up Opportunities to Strengthen Connection and Engagement with our Community	X		X			
Enrich existing connections by exploring untapped opportunities for collaboration.		X	X			
Spark new relationships between organizations and changemakers in our community.		X	X			
Empower staff, board, allies to act as ambassadors in all we do.	X					
Be the trusted source for community-wide information, reaching people where they are, enticing and engaging users and non-users.	X	X	X			

Appendix A: Strategic Plan Alignment of Trends and Actions

	Trend 1 Intellectual Freedom	Trend 2 Growing Community	Trend 3 Space Pressure	Trend 4 Library of Things	Trend 5 Artificial Intelligence	Trend 6 Rise in Digital Use
Build Up our Reputation as a Trusted Community Asset	X				X	
Combat fake news with factual information and stimulate critical inquiry.	X				X	
Support and encourage the democratic process.	X					
Establish our virtual and physical spaces as venues for idea exchange and dialogue.	X	X				
Embrace our role as an open, warm, welcoming space for all.	X	X	X			
Raise Up the Library's identity as an innovative hub.			X	X	X	X
Push beyond our comfort zone to meet our community's evolving needs.				X	X	
Forge into the future by continuously integrating new ideas and creative solutions.				X	X	X
Challenge staff to embrace novelty and thrive with change.		X			X	
Inspire transformation within our community and our industry		X	X	X		X
Light Up Pathways to Personal and Professional Growth	X		X	X	X	
Ignite curiosity, stimulate the imagination and evoke joy through opportunities to express, create, discover and connect.				X		
Instill a love of lifelong learning and discovery				X		
Champion all forms of literacy.	X			X		X
Empower the community with tools, skills, opportunities and human connections.		X	X	X	X	X

Policy Changes Summary

8a. ACCESSIBILITY – Integrated Access Standards Policy #A-2023-14
- Minor wording and formatting changes

8b. EMPLOYMENT – Social Media Policy #E-2023-15
- Minor wording changes
- Formatting changes to have sections numbered for ease of reading
- New Section Added under Section 1. Responsibility:
  - Library employees with authorized access to official Library social media channels are expected to represent the organization professionally and positively, according to the goals and standards set out in this policy.

  - Library Board members do not have access to official social media channels, however, board members may have a role in sharing Library updates and promoting organizational initiatives across their personal social media accounts and should adhere to the Library's policies, code of conduct and guidelines.

  - Authorized External Contributors include individuals and partner organizations outside the organization who are invited to contribute content to the official social media channels of the Library. They have an important role in maintaining a welcoming and supportive environment on the Library's social media channels, which can be done by adhering to the Library's policies, code of conduct and guidelines.
- Section called "Using Innisfil ideaLAB Social Media Accounts" was renamed "Content Guidelines; Section was moved to "Guidelines" from "Administration"; minor changes to language in this section
- Additions/changes to Section 5. Monitoring Inappropriate Content:
  The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library encourages focused, thoughtful comments and discussion which respond to a particular topic, new initiative or upcoming event. Comments that include one or more of the following may be removed or modified at any time, and users that ignore these comment guidelines may be banned or blocked. ==The Library reserves the right to delete, remove, or not accept, any content submitted that the Library believes, in its sole and unfettered discretion, is objectionable or that:==

    - Is misleading, false, deceptive, or attempts to derail the conversation;
    - Is in violation of any provincial or federal law, rule, regulation or any third party right or promotes such illegal activity;
    - Is in contravention of any Innisfil ideaLAB & Library policies or guidelines;
    - Is ==harmful, racist,== homophobic, discriminatory, malicious, aggressive, threatening, sexist, harassing, defamatory, vulgar, sexually explicit or otherwise objectionable;

Policy Changes Summary

- - Is unsolicited or unauthorized, such as unsolicited or unauthorized advertising or promotional material;
  - Is in breach of any confidence;
  - Includes personal data or information about others;
  - <mark>Impersonates any person or entity, or falsely states or otherwise misrepresents their affiliation with a person or organization;</mark>
  - <mark>may infringe another person's intellectual property rights, including copyright.</mark>

<mark>In general, Library accounts should be frequently monitored during core business hours and during special events; however, it is understood and noted on the accounts that they will not be monitored at all times.</mark>

- Section added under 8. Personal Use of Social Media
  - When using social media for personal use and when identifiable as a Library employee, staff must be aware of their role in the organization and the potential impact of their communications on the brand, reputation and service values of the Library and act appropriately and with good judgement.

  - In accordance with the Library's policies and procedures, the Library may take appropriate action in response to prohibited behaviour, up to, and including, dismissal and/or legal action.

8c. EMPLOYMENT – Hours of Work and Overtime Policy #E-2023-16

- Minor wording and formatting changes
- In Section 2. Unexpected Closure, addition of:
  - During periods of extraordinary circumstances, such as a pandemic, significant inclement weather, or other emergencies, the Library may request that employees work remotely for a temporary period, if operationally feasible, based upon the nature and scope of the positions.

8d. EMPLOYMENT – Working Alone Policy #E-2023-17

- Minor wording and formatting changes
- Addition of the definition of "Hazard"
- Removed procedural section, as it is contained in the Working Alone Procedure

SUBJECT:	**ACCESSIBILITY - INTEGRATED ACCESSIBILITY STANDARDS - REGULATION 191/11 (AODA 2005) POLICY**
Policy No:	**A-2023-14**
Date:	**June 19, 2023**
Review Date:	**June 2027**
Pages:	**11 + 7 Appendices**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to facilitate the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library's regulatory compliance with the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation (O. Reg. 191/11) of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) and all policy requirements under the Regulation. The AODA and its Regulations indicate that failure to comply with the requirements set out in the Act and Regulations may result in administrative penalties for the obligated organization.

This policy outlines the Library's commitment to providing unhindered access to all users, as well as the overall strategic direction that the Library will follow in the identification, removal, and prevention of barriers to ensure consistent opportunity and access to the Library's goods, services, and facilities.

POLICY
General
Statement of Organizational Commitment

The Innisfil Public Library Board establishes and implements practices and procedures that respect the dignity and independence of persons with disabilities. The Library is committed to ensuring that each employee, volunteer and customer receives equitable treatment with respect to employment and services without discrimination, and receives accommodation where required, in a timely manner, to the point of undue hardship and in accordance with the Ontario Human Rights Code and the AODA and its regulations.

The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to providing persons with disabilities consistent opportunity and access to the Library's goods, services, and facilities. The Library will ensure that policies, procedures, and practices are provided in a manner that is timely and guided by the principles of integration, independence, dignity, and equal opportunity.

When communicating with a person with a disability, Library Staff will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. The Library will endeavor to follow the compliance schedule of the legislation when implementing each of the requirements addressed in this policy.

Background
Effective July 1st, 2016, Ontario Regulation 429/07 - Accessibility Standards for Customer Service, and Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards (Information and Communication, Employment, Transportation and Design of Public Spaces), were consolidated into a single Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation through amendments contained in Ontario Regulation 165/16.

Application
This Policy applies to all Library employees, including full-time, part-time, student, co-op, or contract service employees, Board Members and volunteers, who work in the Library or in library owned or controlled offices, facilities and work sites, and as such also applies to all Library Branch facilities.

Definitions
Accessible Formats may include, but are not limited to, large print, recorded audio and electronic formats, Braille, and other formats usable by persons with disabilities.

Barrier means anything that prevents a person with a disability from fully participating in all aspects of society because of his or her disability. This includes physical, architectural, information or communication, attitudinal or technological barriers, a policy or a practice.

Communication Support may include, but is not limited to, captioning, alternative and augmentative communication supports, plain language, sign language, and other supports that facilitate effective communications.

Disability means, as per the Human Rights Code:
- Any degree of physical disability, infirmity, malformation or disfigurement that is caused by bodily injury, birth defect or illness and, without limiting the generality of the foregoing, includes diabetes mellitus, epilepsy, a brain injury, any degree of paralysis, amputation, lack of physical coordination, blindness or visual impediment, deafness or hearing impairment, muteness or speech impediment, or physical reliance on a guide dog or other animal or on a wheelchair or other remedial appliance or device;
- A condition of mental impairment or a developmental disability;
- A learning disability or a dysfunction in one or more of the processes involved in understanding or using symbols or spoken language;
- A mental disorder; or
- An injury or disability for which benefits were claimed or received under the insurance plan established under the *Workplace Safety and Insurance Act, 1997*.

Guide Dog means a dog trained as a guide for a person who is visually impaired and having the qualifications prescribed by the regulations in the Blind Persons' Rights Act.

Kiosk means an interactive electronic terminal, including a point-of-sale device, intended for public use that allows users to access one or more services or products or both.

Library means Innisfil Public Library Board.

Planned Service Disruption means a scheduled shutdown or closure of a Library facility, program or service which may result in a reduction or change to a service level.

Support Person means, in relation to a person with a disability, another person who accompanies him or her in order to help with communication, mobility, personal care or medical needs with access to goods, services or facilities.

Service Animal is an animal for a person with a disability, if
    a) The animal can be readily identified as one that is being used by the person for reasons relating to the person's disability, as a result of visual indicators such as the vest or harness worn by the animal; or
    b) The person provides documentation from a regulated health professional as indicated in the *Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation,* which confirms that the person requires the animal for reasons relating to the disability.

Guidelines
1.0 *Responsibility*
It is the responsibility of the Innisfil Public Library Board and all Library employees to ensure that this policy is adhered to and that the practices of the Library demonstrate a commitment to accessibility as outlined in this policy and accessibility legislation.

2.0 *Application*
2.1. *Accessibility Plans*
The Library will establish, implement, maintain, and document a Multi-Year Accessibility Plan that will outline its strategy to prevent and remove barriers to persons with disabilities and meet the requirements under accessibility legislation. The plan will be established in consultation with the *Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee*. Members of the public, including those living with disabilities, will be encouraged to provide input into the plan. The Innisfil Public Library Board will review and approve the plan.

At least once every five years, the Library will review and update the Accessibility Plan following the same public consultation and approval process as outlined for the initial development of the plan.

Status reports will be presented to the Library Board and the *Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee.* The report will outline the progress of measures taken to implement the plan and the Library's strategy to identify, prevent, and remove barriers to those with disabilities.

The Library will make all accessibility plans and annual status reports available to the public. All plans and reports will be posted on the Library's website and made available at library facilities. The Library will provide the documents in an accessible format, upon request.

2.2. *Procuring or Acquiring Goods, Services or Facilities*
The Library will incorporate accessibility criteria and features when procuring or acquiring goods, services or facilities, except when it is not practicable to do so.

The Library will provide an explanation, upon request, when it has not been practicable to incorporate accessibility features.

2.3. *Self-Service Kiosks*
The Library shall have regard to the accessibility for persons with disabilities when designing, procuring or acquiring self-service kiosks.

2.4. *Training*
The Library will ensure that training is provided on the requirements of accessibility standards, the purpose of the Act, and on the Human Rights Code as it pertains to persons with disabilities.

Such training will be provided to:
- All paid employees, Library Board Members, and Long Term Volunteers (See the Volunteer Policy);
- All persons who participate in developing Library policies; and

The training will also review the requirements of the Customer Service Standards, and instruction about the following:
- How to interact and communicate with persons with various types of disabilities;
- How to interact with a person with a disability/disabilities, who uses an assistive device or requires the assistance of a guide dog or other service animal, or the assistance of a support person;
- How to use equipment or devices available on the service provider's premises or otherwise provided by the service provider that may help with the provision of goods, services or facilities to a person with a disability;
- What to do if a person with a particular type of disability is having difficulty accessing the provider's goods, services or facilities.

The specified training and information will be provided to each person to whom this policy applies as soon as is practicable, as well as on an ongoing basis in respect to any changes to the Library's policies, procedures and practices governing the provision of goods, services, and facilities to persons with disabilities.

A record of the training provided, the date of the training and the recipients will be maintained. The names of individuals trained will be recorded for training administration purposes, subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.*

2.5. *Feedback*
The Library will ensure that the processes for receiving and responding to feedback are accessible to persons with disabilities. The public will be notified of the availability of accessible formats and communications support by including notice on the Library's website, on Library premises and other appropriate locations. Upon request, accessible formats or communication supports will be provided or arranged.

2.6. *Accessible Formats and Communication Supports*
Upon request, the Library will provide, or arrange for the provision of, accessible formats or communication supports for persons with disabilities.

These accessible formats and communication supports will be provided in a timely manner and in a way that takes into account the individual's accessibility needs due to disability. The Library will consult with the person making the request to determine the suitability of an accessible format or communication support. Such accessible documents and communication supports will be provided at a cost no greater than the regular cost charged to others.

The Library will notify the public about the availability of accessible formats and communication supports, upon request, by including a notice on its website and on many of the documents produced by the Library. If a document, or portions of a document, cannot be converted into an accessible format, the Library will provide an explanation or summary of such information in an accessible format.

2.7. *Emergency Procedure, Plan or Public Safety Information*
The Library will, upon request, provide emergency procedures, plans and public safety information in an accessible format or with communication support, as soon as is practicable.

2.8. *Accessible Websites and Web Content*
The Library will ensure that its publicly accessible Internet websites and web content conform with the World Wide Web Consortium Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.0 initially at Level A and increasing to Level AA.

2.9. *Recruitment, Assessment and Selection*
The Library is committed to equitable consideration of candidates during the recruitment, assessment and selection process. All job applicants will be notified of the availability of accommodations for persons with disabilities in the employment application process.

Individuals selected to participate in assessment or selection processes, such as an interview or testing, will be notified of the availability of accommodation, upon request, during such an assessment or selection process. In cases where accommodations due to disability are requested, the Library will consult with the individual and provide or arrange for suitable accommodations in a manner that takes into account the applicant's disability needs. Accommodations will be provided with respect to the materials or processes used in recruitment.

When making offers of employment, the Library will notify the successful applicant of its policies for accommodating employees with disabilities. This notification will be provided verbally at the time of offer and in the Offer of Employment letter.

2.10. *Informing Employees of Supports*
The Library will inform employees of its policies, and any updates to such policies, used to support employees with disabilities. The Library will provide this information to new employees as soon as practicable after commencing employment. This includes policies on providing job accommodations that take into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability.

2.11. *Accessible Formats and Communication Supports for Employees*
The Library will, when requested by an employee living with a disability, consult with the employee to provide or arrange for the provision of accessible formats and communication supports for information that is required in order to perform the job, as well as information that is generally available to employees in the workplace.

The Library will consult with the employee making the request in determining the suitability of an accessible format or communication support.

2.12. *Workplace Emergency Response Information*
The Library is committed to ensuring the safety of its employees. Individualized workplace emergency response information will be provided to employees who have a disability, if the disability is such that the individualized information is necessary and the employer is aware of the employee's need. This information will be provided as soon as practicable after the Library becomes aware of the need for accommodation.

When an employee requires assistance in an emergency, the Library will, with the employee's consent, provide such information to the person designated by the Library to provide assistance.

The Library will review the individualized workplace emergency response information when an employee moves to a different location within the organization, when the employee's overall accommodation needs and plans are reviewed, and when the Library reviews its general emergency policies.

2.13. _Documented Individual Accommodation Plans_

The Library will develop a written process for the development of documented individual accommodation plans for employees with disabilities. The individual accommodation plan will include:

If requested, any information regarding accessible formats and communication supports provided to the employee;

- If required, individualized workplace emergency response information; and
- Any other accommodations which are to be provided.

2.14. _Return to Work Process_

The Library will maintain a documented return to work process for employees with a disability and who require disability-related accommodation in order to return to work.

The Library's return to work process will outline the steps the Library will take to facilitate the return to work and will include documented individual accommodation plans as part of the process.

This return to work process will not replace or override any other return to work process created by or under any other statute (i.e., the Workplace Safety Insurance Act, 1997).

2.15. _Performance Management, Career Development and Advancement, and Redeployment_

The Library will take into account the accessibility needs of employees with disabilities and any individual accommodation plans when providing any performance management, career development, and advancement.

In the event of redeployment (reassigning employees to other branches or service area jobs within the Library as an alternative to layoff when a particular job or service area has been eliminated), the Library will also take into account the employee's accessibility needs due to disability and any individual accommodation plan.

2.16. _Use of Service Animals_

Persons with disabilities may enter premises owned and/or operated by the Library Board accompanied by their service animal and keep that animal with them in areas/premises that are open to the public, when accessing goods, services and facilities provided by the Library, unless the animal is otherwise excluded by legislation (see non-exhaustive list of such legislation under References and Related Documents).

In the event that a service animal is otherwise prohibited by law from the premises, the Library will ensure that alternate means are available to enable the person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Library's goods and services and facilities.

Where it is not readily apparent that an animal is a Service Animal, Library Staff may ask for verification by asking to see a letter from a physician, nurse, or an identification card from the Ministry of the Attorney General, as per legislated guidelines.

Service animals must be supervised by their owners and be kept in control at all times.

2.17. *Use of Support Persons*
Persons with disabilities are permitted to be accompanied by their support person in areas/premises that are open to the public when accessing goods, services and facilities provided by the Library.

If a person with a disability is accompanied by a support person, the provider of goods, services or facilities, shall ensure that both persons are permitted to enter the premises together and that the person with a disability is not prevented from having access to the support person while on the premises.

The Library may require a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person while using library premises in situations where it is necessary to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health and safety of others on the premises, and if there is no other reasonable way to protect the health or safety of the person with a disability or the health or safety of others on the premises. The Library will consult with the person with a disability and consider the available evidence to determine if the person with a disability is required to be accompanied by a support person.

A support person, when assisting a person with a disability to obtain, use or benefit from the Library's goods, services, or facilities, will be permitted to attend at no charge where an admission fee is applicable; however, where it is beyond the control of the Library Board to waive the fee, advance notice of the fee will be provided. In situations where the Library requires a person with a disability to be accompanied by a support person, any fee or payment will be waived with respect to the support person's admission to the premises or in connection with the support person's presence on the premises.

2.18. *Notice of Service Disruptions*
In the event of a planned service disruption to goods, services, facilities, or systems, the Library will provide notice of the disruption in advance. In the event of an unexpected disruption, the Library will provide notice as soon as possible.

The notice will include information about the reason for the disruption, its anticipated duration and a description of alternative goods, services, facilities, or systems that may be available.

Notice may be given by posting the information in visible places, or on the Library's website (www.innisfilidealab.ca) or by such other method or means as is reasonable under the circumstances.

2.19. *Customer Feedback*
In an effort to improve on the provision of library goods and services to persons with disabilities, feedback from the public is welcomed. To assist with the collection of feedback, the Library will maintain a feedback form and will also accept comments in any form (in person, electronic format, written, etc.). All feedback will be logged, and all questions and concerns will be acknowledged within a maximum of two (2) business days from the date of receipt. Response time to the feedback will depend on the issue, but will not exceed fifteen (15) business days unless there are extenuating circumstances. In this case, individuals will be notified that there will be a delay in receiving a response.

Complaints regarding accessibility issues, collected through the feedback process, will be provided to the Innisfil Accessibility Advisory Committee (I.A.A.C) subject to the *Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*, for review and discussion. The Committee will then forward its recommendations to the CEO for consideration.

Information on the feedback process will be readily available to the public through postings on library premises, the library website and other appropriate locations.

2.20. *Notification of the Availability and Format of Documents*
The Library shall notify the public that the documents required by the Integrated Accessibility Standards (Ontario Regulation 191/11) and the Library's Integrated Accessibility Standard Regulation Policy, procedures, notices of temporary disruptions, training records are available upon request, subject to the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA).

Notice of the availability of documents may be given by posting the information in conspicuous places owned and/or operated by the Innisfil Public Library Board, the library website and/or any other reasonable method.

When communicating with a person with a disability, the Library will do so in a manner that takes into account the person's disability. The Library and the person with a disability will agree on what format will be used. The document or information will be provided to the person in an accessible format or with communication support in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular cost charged.

2.21. *Public Libraries*
In Section 19 of the Integrated Accessibility Standard, Ontario Regulation 191/11, there are requirements that relate specifically to public libraries.

Innisfil Public Library Board:
- Shall provide access to or arrange for the provision of access to accessible materials where they exist;
- Shall make information about the availability of accessible materials publicly available and shall provide the information in an accessible format or with appropriate communication supports, upon request;

- May provide accessible formats for archival materials, special collections, rare books and donations.

3.0 *References and Related Documents*
- Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2001;
- Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005;
- Ontario Regulation 191/11 – Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation;
- Ontario Human Rights Code;
- Town of Innisfil Annual Accessibility Plan;
- Innisfil Public Library Accessibility Plan;
- Other Accessibility Standards as approved into Regulation

Appendices
Appendix #1 – Request for Innisfil Public Library Documentation in an Alternate Format Form;
Appendix #2 – Customer Feedback Form;
Appendix #3 – Customer Feedback on Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Form;
Appendix #4 – Record of Customer Service Feedback as per Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005 Form;
Appendix #5 – Notice of Service Disruption – Planned Form;
Appendix #6 – Notice of Service Disruption – Unexpected Form;
Appendix #7 – AODA Training Record Form.

Related Policies
E-EMPLOYMENT – Accommodation and Return to Work Policy.

Related Procedures
A-2014-02 – AODA 2005 Feedback Process;
A-2014-03 – AODA 2005 Notice of Temporary Disruptions Process;
A-2014-04 – AODA 2005 Training Process;
A-2014-05 – AODA 2005 Accessible Clear Print Guidelines.

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, June 19, 2023, Motion #2023.XX

Supersedes Policy #A-2019-16, approved June 17, 2019, Motion #2019.53; and merges and supersedes AODA – Meeting the Requirements of the Regulations Policy #2014-02, approved January 20, 2014, Motion #2014.07 (*Policy **REPEALED** June 17, 2019, Motion #2019.54*); &
Supersedes Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation Policy #A-2016-15, approved October 17, 2016, Motion #2016.79; &

Merges and supersedes Integrated Accessibility Standards – Regulation 191/11 (AODA 2005) Policy #2012-13, approved December 10, 2012, Motion #2012.85 Final Approval - January 21, 2013, Motion #2013.07; &

Accessibility - Accessible Customer Service Policy #A-2014-18, approved September 15, 2014, Motion #2014.65; &

Policy #2009-12, approved November 16, 2009, Motion #2009.75.

Request for Innisfil Public Library Documentation in an Alternate Format Form

Name:
Address:
Telephone Number:
Fax Number:
Email:
Name of Document:
Name and Date of Event:
Format Requested: Example: Large Print, Electronic, etc. (Please indicate any technical needs)
Additional Information regarding the request or document (i.e. time factors):

PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM TO: CEO, Innisfil Public Library,
967 Innisfil Beach Rd., Innisfil, Ont., L9S 1V3
or email accessibility@innisfilidealab.ca.

Personal information collected on this form is collected under the authority of section 367 (1) of the Municipal Act, R.S.O. 1990, c.M.45. It will be used to provide a document or information produced by the Innisfil Public Library, as requested. Questions about this collection may be directed by mail to the CEO, Innisfil ideaLAB & Library, 967 Innisfil Beach Road, Innisfil, Ontario, L9S 1V3.

Internal Use – To Be Completed by the Library			
Date Received	Document's Originating Contact	Date Completed	Cost

This document is available upon request in an alternate format.

Customer Feedback Form

Thank you for visiting a branch of the Innisfil Public Library. Your feedback is important to us. By answering the following questions you will help our organization to better assist you.

1	Date, time and place you visited:	
2	Did we respond to your customer services needs today?	□ Yes □ No
3	Was our customer service provided to you in an accessible manner?	□ Yes □ Somewhat (Please explain below) □ No (Please explain below)
4	Did you encounter any problems in accessing our goods and services?	□ Yes (Please explain below) □ Somewhat (Please explain below) □ No

The Innisfil Public Library Board welcomes your comments:

Thank you.

Customer Feedback on Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities

The Innisfil Public Library strives to meet the needs of our customers. We use your feedback to ensure that we meet reasonable expectations and can provide our services to all of our users, and make improvements where necessary.

___

NOTE: This form is always available online at www.innisfilidealab.ca and is available in alternate formats at the Library.

When did you visit the Library (date and time)?

_____

Which Branch did you visit?

_____

Did we respond to your customer service needs?

□ Yes   □ No

Was your customer service provided in an accessible manner?

□ Yes   □ Somewhat   □ No

Please explain:

Did you have any problem accessing our services?

□ Yes   □ Somewhat   □ No

Please explain:

_____

Do you have any other comments?

_____

Contact Information (OPTIONAL):

Name:

Address:

Phone Number: (Day)   (Evening)

Email Address:

Preferred Method of Contact: □ Mail   □ Phone   □ Email

Record of Customer Service Feedback as per Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act 2005

Date Feedback Received: _____

Date Feedback Acknowledged: _____

Contact Information:
Name:
Address:
Phone (Day):
Phone (Evening):
E-mail:
Preferred Method of Contact: □ Mail   □ Phone   □ E-mail

Summary of Feedback:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

Management Team Member Assigned to:

_____

Date for Update to Chief Librarian/CEO: _____

NOTICE
<u>Service Disruption</u>

There will be a **scheduled** service disruption at the [name] Branch of Innisfil Public Library located at [address].

The disruptions will be from [time] on [day month year] until [time] on [day month year].

These disruptions include:

- _____

- _____

The following alternative services are available:

_____

For questions or additional information, please contact 705-431-7410

Or email accessibility@innisfilidealab.ca.

NOTICE
Service Disruption

The [name] Branch of the Innisfil Public Library, located at [address] is experiencing an **unexpected** service disruption.

The estimated time of the service disruption will be from [time] [day month year] to [time] [day month year].

These disruptions include:

- _____

- _____

The following alternative services are available:

_____

For questions or additional information, please contact 705-431-7410.

Or email accessibility@innisfilidealab.ca.

AODA 2005 Training Record

Date:
Location:
Training Content:
Trainers:

Name	Signature

SUBJECT:	**EMPLOYMENT - SOCIAL MEDIA POLICY**
Policy No:	**E-2023-15**
Date:	**June 19, 2023**
Review Date:	**June 2027**
Pages:	**6**

PURPOSE

The Innisfil ideaLAB & Library is committed to providing excellence in customer service and delivering services in an efficient and effective manner. The intent of this policy is to help employees understand opportunities, manage risks, and recognize the responsibilities and boundaries associated with using social media. Staff should use this policy to guide them in the acceptable use of social media and to help them distinguish between corporate use and personal use. In addition, the policy provides best practices for creating, posting and working with social media.

POLICY

General
Recognizing excellence in customer service, employee accountability, the execution of strategic deliverables and community services/programs, the Social Media Policy recognizes the value and public interest in social media, creating a dynamic communications opportunity to keep Library customers informed and engaged.

Application
This policy applies to all Library Staff and Innisfil Public Library Board members.

Definitions

Social Media Channel – Internet-based websites and applications that enable the creation and sharing of content or to participate in social networking.

Content – Any information that is communicated on a social media channel.

Corporate Use – Refers to approved activity on social media or a social media account that is operated and maintained by the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library.

Personal Use – Refers to an employee's personal use of social media accounts on any social media platform at any time.

GUIDELINES

1.   Responsibility
Social media is a communication and engagement tool used by the Library to reach its customers. The Manager of Engagement & Community Development is responsible for oversight of the Library's social media channels and the Library's Communications staff are responsible for managing the overall image, brand and reputation of the Library.

The conduct of each and every employee has an influence on the image of the organization. Library employees with authorized access to official Library social media channels are expected to represent the organization professionally and positively, according to the goals and standards set out in this policy.

Library Board members do not have access to official social media channels, however, board members may have a role in sharing Library updates and promoting organizational initiatives across their personal social media accounts and should adhere to the Library's policies, code of conduct and guidelines.

Authorized External Contributors include individuals and partner organizations outside the organization who are invited to contribute content to the official social media channels of the Library. They have an important role in maintaining a welcoming and supportive environment on the Library's social media channels, which can be done by adhering to the Library's policies, code of conduct and guidelines.

2.   Content Guidelines
Authorized users of any of the Library's social media accounts, act as a spokesperson for the organization and must conduct themselves accordingly by following the Library's Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest policies. Each Library social media account should have a specific purpose and take advantage of any popular/relevant trends when possible. Any posting made on the organization's

social media accounts must be respectful and must serve or reflect the Library in one or more of the following ways:

- Providing customers with relevant news and/or information about the Library;
- Directing users to information that can be found on the Library's website;
- Responding to relevant, legitimate questions made by customers about programming and services;
- Promoting Library events, programs, services, job postings and achievements;
- Engaging and building relationships with patrons, stakeholders and others interested in learning more about the Library;
- Promoting the rich culture and/or diversity of Innisfil and its residents;
- The Library will endeavour when possible, to post or reshare community posts, permitted they meet our content guidelines, and the Library has availability in its content calendar. The Library retains the right to deny requests.

3.   Emergency Management

During an emergency or extraordinary event, the Town of Innisfil's Emergency Information Officer or their designated alternate will provide emergency information for the Library's social media accounts. The Emergency Information Officer is responsible for making sure that critical emergency response details and/or information is posted in a timely manner.

ADMINISTRATION

Participating in social media carries a certain amount of risk. To manage risk effectively, all Library employees need to know, understand and put into practice the guidelines for acceptable use of social media. The following guidelines have been developed to help staff use social media appropriately and effectively in their work.

4.   Standards

All content posted to corporate Library social media accounts must be accurate and reflect all applicable corporate policies already in place. Content is subject to the following:

- Confidential or sensitive information acquired through work must not be posted;
- Library employees should take care not to put themselves into a conflict of interest in online discussions of organizational issues – even if they are speaking from their personal perspective, people may assume they are speaking on behalf of the Innisfil Library and/or the Town of Innisfil;
- The Library Board of Directors, CEO, managers, staff and suppliers, as well as Town of Innisfil elected officials, CAO, directors, managers, staff, suppliers, consultants and the like may not be quoted/cited without their approval;

- Any error made on social media must be corrected transparently; erroneous comments cannot be deleted as this action risks misleading the public;
- Content must be respectful and cannot promote statements that could be deemed politically sensitive, religious, copy written, or libelous;
- Corporate platforms cannot be used for staff or Board commercial gain or to promote illegal activity.

5.   Monitoring Inappropriate Content

The Library encourages focused, thoughtful comments and discussion which respond to a particular topic, new initiative or upcoming event. Comments that include one or more of the following may be removed or modified at any time, and users that ignore these comment guidelines may be banned or blocked. The Library reserves the right to delete, remove, or not accept, any content submitted that the Library believes, in its sole and unfettered discretion, is objectionable or that:

- Is misleading, false, deceptive, or attempts to derail the conversation;
- Is in violation of any provincial or federal law, rule, regulation or any third party right or promotes such illegal activity;
- Is in contravention of any Library policies or guidelines;
- Is harmful, racist, homophobic, discriminatory, malicious, aggressive, threatening, sexist, harassing, defamatory, vulgar, sexually explicit or otherwise objectionable;
- Is unsolicited or unauthorized, such as unsolicited or unauthorized advertising or promotional material;
- Is in breach of any confidence;
- Includes personal data or information about others;
- Impersonates any person or entity, or falsely states or otherwise misrepresents their affiliation with a person or organization;
- may infringe another person's intellectual property rights, including copyright.

In general, Library accounts should be frequently monitored during core business hours and during special events; however, it is understood and noted on the accounts that they will not be monitored at all times.

6.   Elections and Political Posting

Library Social Media accounts are not to be used as a platform for political campaigning at any time. Communications Services monitors all corporate accounts to ensure they are not used for any political reasons. During a municipal, provincial or federal election, corporate accounts should not have any connection to a politician running for office. Library accounts already following or liking such politicians should stop following them for the duration of the political campaign.Library accounts should not share content from election candidates or endorse candidates.

7.   Privacy and Record Keeping

Privacy, and human rights laws and policies apply to social media sites and accounts as they do to other forms of communication. The Library is subject to the Ontario Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA). As a result, any content posted on any Library Social Media account will be in accordance with the organization's records management bylaws. A copy of any content that is removed because it does not meet the Library's standards, including inappropriate content, must be saved in a digital and/or printed form by Communications Services.

8.   Personal Use of Social Media

In addition to using social media for business purposes, Library employees in their private capacity as a citizen, may want to use social media to share information and communicate with friends, family and co-workers.

When using social media for personal use and when identifiable as a Library employee, staff must be aware of their role in the organization and the potential impact of their communications on the brand, reputation and service values of the Library and act appropriately and with good judgement.

In accordance with the Library's policies and procedures, the Library may take appropriate action in response to prohibited behaviour, up to, and including, dismissal and/or legal action.

Employees who identify themselves as Library staff or who are identified as Library staff in their personal social media use should consider the following:

- Even if you do not explicitly identify yourself as an employee, others may identify you as an employee by your name, your place of work, a photograph, or by the content you post;
- Do not place yourself in a conflict of interest, including revealing confidential or privileged corporate information, as described in the Library's Code of Conduct/Conflict of Interest Policies;
- Do not identify or comment about other employees or customers without their consent;
- In their personal use, self-identified or identifiable Library employees must abide by the Respectful Workplace Policy and other applicable policies that govern employee behaviour;
- Members of the Library Board must be respectful and considerate in their posts, even when using personal accounts. In consideration of the Code of Conduct, all members must follow the general conduct outlined within, including guidelines around confidential information, improper use of influence and conduct during an election campaign.

Related Policies
EMPLOYMENT - Respectful Workplace, Harassment & Violence Prevention
Policy
EMPLOYMENT – Staff Code of Conduct Policy
EMPLOYMENT - Conflict of Interest Policy

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, June 19, 2023
Motion Number: 2023.XX

Supersedes Policy #2020-17, approved June 15, 2020, Motion #2020.50; and
Policy #2016-03, approved January 18, 2018, Motion #2016.10 & Policy #2012-03, approved April 23, 2012, Motion #2012.32; &
Policy #2009-01, approved on January 19, 2009, Motion #2009.06; &
Policy #2006-02, approved on January 16, 2006, Motion #2006.06; &
Policy #2001-03, approved on November 13, 1991, Motion #91.66.

SUBJECT: **EMPLOYMENT – HOURS OF WORK AND OVERTIME**

Policy No: **E-2023-16**

Date: **June 19, 2023**

Review Date: **June 2027**

Pages: **5**

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to provide guidelines for the hours of work and overtime as applicable to Innisfil ideaLAB & Library Staff.

POLICY
Application
This policy applies to all employees at all locations of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library.

Definitions
Full-time employment means employees whose normal work period consists of seventy (70) hours in two weeks and not more than 1,820 hours annually.

Part-time employment means employees whose work period consists of less than 1,820 hours annually.

Permanent employees means full-time or part-time employees who have successfully completed the stipulated probationary period and whose contracts do not include a specific termination date.

Contract employment means employment for a specific period of time and which is terminated upon completion of such time-period. Contract employment may consist of full-time or part-time hours, as designated by the contract. A contract may be extended contingent upon library needs, budget and satisfactory job performance.

Relief employment means employees who are contracted to fill in gaps in the schedule on an '*as required*' basis.

The Library's *work week* shall be from Monday to Sunday and as such may include weekends, evenings and shift work.

Guidelines

1. ***HOURS OF WORK***

    Hours of work, work schedules and days of work for all employees shall be determined based on the needs of the Employer and are subject to the provisions of the *Employment Standards Act, 2000, as amended.* The minimum shift for all employees shall be three (3) hours.

    The following paragraphs and sections are intended to define the hours of work and shall not be construed as a guarantee of hours of work per day or per week or of days of work per week.

    1.1 Permanent Full-Time Employees

    The regular hours of work for permanent full-time library employees shall consist of seventy (70) hours in two weeks exclusive of meal periods, scheduled as required to ensure optimal library operations, and thus employees may be required to adjust their hours of work from time to time.

    1.2 Permanent Part-Time Employees

    The workweek and/or shift for part-time employees will consist of such hours and times as may be determined from time to time by the CEO and subject to the requirements of the applicable branch or service area.

    Contracted hours may be exceeded in certain circumstances and at the sole discretion of the CEO. When library needs require that the employee's average weekly allotment of hours be increased for a specific period of time, the employee will be notified in writing.

2. ***UNEXPECTED CLOSURE***

    When a decision to close a Branch or the entire library system during normally scheduled hours of work, is issued by the CEO or designate, Staff will be paid for the shift(s), which they were scheduled to complete.

    During periods of extraordinary circumstances, such as a pandemic, significant inclement weather, or other emergencies, the Library may request that employees work remotely for a temporary period, if operationally feasible, based upon the nature and scope of the positions.

    At the discretion of the CEO or designate, employees may be required to work their normal scheduled hours at another branch of the Library or location.

3. *REST PERIODS*
   3.1 Paid Rest Periods
   If the employee is expected to remain in the workplace, then the rest period is paid *(Employment Standards Act, 2000, as amended).*

   Employees scheduled to work for a five (5) hour shift shall be provided with a fifteen (15) minute rest period, subject to the requirements of the service area.

   3.2 Unpaid Rest Periods
   All scheduled employees working more than five (5) hours in a day will be provided with one non-paid lunch/dinner break of minimum one-half hour during each shift worked.

4. *CHANGE IN WORK-DAY LOCATION*
   In the event that an employee is required to work at more than one location within an assigned workday, the employee's reasonable travel time from one location to the other, shall be considered work-time.

5. *OVERTIME*
   a. Except in the case of an emergency, all overtime must be authorized in advance by the CEO or designate. *The Employment Standards Act 2000, as amended,* states that no one may work more than 8 hours per day or 48 hours per work week unless they receive prior authorization from the CEO or designate.

   b. For Full-Time employees whose positions fall below Level 7 on the Job Classification Salary Grid, all authorized time worked beyond forty-eight (48) hours in a week shall be considered as overtime and shall be paid at the rate of time and one half for the hours worked. In lieu of being paid for overtime, upon employee request, some overtime earned may be banked as lieu time at the discretion of the CEO or designate, to an accumulated maximum of thirty-five (35) hours per calendar year.

   Banked lieu time (which is accumulated at the same rate as overtime – time and one-half) is to be taken within three (3) months of earning the banked time. Such lieu time shall be taken at a time mutually convenient to the employee and employer and is subject to the approval of the CEO or designate.

   Any accumulated and authorized time off in lieu of overtime earned by the employee but not taken as of December 31st of the calendar year in which it was earned, will be paid out to the employee by the Library at the overtime rate at which the overtime was originally earned.

Where an employee is attending a conference or seminar paid for by the Library Board, overtime compensation shall not apply.

c. Certain Officers / Staff not Eligible
Employees whose positions fall into Level 7 and above of the Job Classification list will from time to time work beyond a regular work week based on the regular work week of their department, recognizing that they may be required by the Library, from time to time, to work more than the regular work week in any one week.

Employees whose positions fall into Level 7 and above are ineligible for overtime. These employees will be entitled to up to five (5) days time off in lieu per year such time to be taken subject to the approval of their manager. This time must be taken in the current year or within the first three months of the following calendar year.

Certain employees, who do not fall into Level 7 and above on the Job Classification Salary Grid, and who are required/expected to work outside of and above their regularly scheduled hours, may be considered eligible for this allocation of lieu time at the discretion of the CEO.

d. Part-Time and Overtime
For the purposes of Permanent Part-Time Employment, overtime shall be governed in accordance with the *Employment Standards Act.*

e. Vacation/Statutory Holiday Pay Not Calculated
Employees receiving vacation/statutory holiday pay under the vacation provisions in the Vacation Policy are not entitled to add those hours or pay for the purposes of calculating overtime.

6. *MEAL ALLOWANCE*
An employee required to work more than four (4) hours of continuous overtime following any one shift shall be provided with a meal allowance as per the Library's current *EMPLOYMENT – Education, Training & Development (Including Reimbursement of Expenses) Policy.*

7. *CALL-OUT GUARANTEE*
Employees who are called to work outside of their scheduled hours for emergency purposes shall be paid for a minimum of three (3) hours at time and one half.

8. *STAND-BY PAY*
Where an employee is requested by their supervisor to be on "stand-by", that employee shall be entitled to stand-by pay at the rate of $25.00 per day.

Related Policies
EMPLOYMENT - Flexible Work Arrangement Policy
EMPLOYMENT – Inclement Weather Policy
EMPLOYMENT - Paid Holidays Policy
EMPLOYMENT- Vacation Policy

Employment Standards Act, 2000, S.O. 2000, c. 41

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, June 19, 2023
Motion Number: 2023.XX

Supersedes Policy #E-2019-12, approved May 21, 2019, Motion # 2019.44; and Policy #E-2011-18, approved October 17, 2011, Motion #2011.62; &
Sections 12 and 13 of the Town's Employee By-Law #038-06 appended to Policy Number 2006-20, approved June 12, 2006 &
Policy Number 2002-30, approved September 12, 2005.

SUBJECT: **EMPLOYMENT - WORKING ALONE POLICY**

Policy No: **E-2023-17**

Date: **June 19, 2023**

Review Date: **June 2027**

Pages: **2**

PURPOSE
The purpose of this policy is to protect the health and safety of and minimize the risk to Library Staff who work alone during their workday.

POLICY
General
The Innisfil Public Library Board is committed to implementing and maintaining a system to support the safety and security of employees working alone. Working alone has the potential to threaten personal safety in situations where assistance is not readily available when needed. Innisfil ideaLAB & Library endeavours to ensure employees do not work alone wherever possible.

Application
All Staff of the Innisfil ideaLAB & Library.

Definitions

Hazard - *A situation or condition that may be dangerous or harmful to employees' health and safety.*

Working Alone - *A Staff Member is considered to be 'working alone' when he/she is working without another Staff Member present in a Library Facility*, when they cannot be seen or heard by another person, or *when travelling alone on work related business. While it is not always hazardous to work alone, it can be when other circumstances are present. Whether a situation is high or low risk will depend on the location, type of work, interaction with the public, and/or the consequences of an emergency, accident, injury, etc. Each situation must be assessed individually for potential risks.*

Working Alone Contact – *The designated in-charge person assigned the duty of ensuring Staff working alone are in regular contact as per this policy.*

GUIDELINES:

1. **Responsibility**
   Management will:
   ● Conduct hazard assessments at each Library facility and work site to identify existing or potential working alone hazards;
   ● Take measures to eliminate or control the hazards of working alone;
   ● Identify previous incidents that have occurred related to working alone. Issues that emerge will be identified and potential solutions will be incorporated into the work alone procedure;
   ● Provide measures for the discreet handling and storage of cash;
   ● Ensure that affected employees are informed of the hazards and methods used to control and eliminate them;
   ● Provide an effective system for communication between any workers who work alone and persons capable of assisting the worker;
   ● Develop working alone procedures specific to each facility or work site;
   ● Ensure incidents are reported, investigated and documented;
   ● Ensure no student, volunteer or youth worker (under 18) shall be allowed to work alone.

   Employees will:
   ● Report all work site incidents immediately to their Supervisor;
   ● Participate in work site hazard assessment and the implementation of procedures to eliminate or control the hazards of working alone;
   ● Participate in work alone training;
   ● Comply with the site-specific working alone policy and procedures.

RELATED DOCUMENTS
Working Alone Procedure
Respectful Workplace, Harassment & Violence Prevention
Health & Safety

Approved by the Innisfil Public Library Board, June 19, 2023, Motion Number: 2023.XX

Supersedes Policy #E-2020-20, approved July 13, 2020, Motion #2020.59; and Policy #E-2014-05, approved February 18, 2014, Motion 2014.16