

MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

**Notice of meeting to be held on Monday, October 27, 2025, 7:00 p.m.
Unionville Library, 15 Library Lane, Unionville L5R 5C4**

AGENDA

1.0 Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda

- 1.1 Adoption of Minutes: (September 22, 2025)
- 1.2 Declaration of Conflict of Interest
- 1.3 Delegations
- 1.4 Chair's Remarks

2.0 Ownership Linkage

- 2.1 Reports from Board Members

3.0 Board Education

- 3.1 Board Education 2026(A. Cecchetto)
- 3.2 Presentation on Community Consultations
(D. Macklin)

4.0 Information Requested by the Board

- 4.1 CEO's Highlights

5.0 Items for Decision

- 5.1 Board Meeting Attendance

6.0 Monitoring Performance

- 6.1 **Ends:**
 - 6.1.1 Strategic Plan Update
- 6.2 **Executive Limitations:**
 - 6.2.1 EL-2b Staff Treatment (R.Chan/A.Cecchetto)
 - 6.2.2 EL-2i Compensation and Benefits
(H.Manougian/M.Sawh)

7.0 Consent Agenda

All items under the Consent Agenda are considered to be routine and are recommended for approval by the Chair.

7.1 Declaration of Due Diligence by the CEO

7.2 Communication and Correspondence:

7.2.1 TorontoPublicLibrary.ca: [Bridge 2023/2024 Report: Impact of Technology Services in Ontario Public Libraries](#)

8.0 Board Performance and Self-Evaluation

8.1 Questionnaire Results: The Conduct of the Board

9.0 New Business

10.0 In-Camera

10.1 To Discuss a Confidential Personnel Matter

11.0 Adjournment

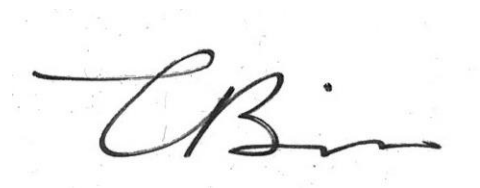
**NEXT MEETING: Monday, November 24, 2025 7:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting by ZOOM**

AGENDA 3.2

TO: Markham Public Library Board
FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer
PREPARED BY: Diane Macklin, Director, Community Engagement
DATE OF MEETING: October 27, 2025
SUBJECT: Community Consultations

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Board receives the Board Education Presentation “Community Consultations.”

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Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

Attachment: Addendum 3.2

This narrative was developed from a series of appreciative inquiry conversations held with community members to help shape the Library's next strategic plan. These conversations were designed to ensure that the community's voice, values, and aspirations are at the heart of the plan. Participants reflected the diversity of the community—across geography, age, and ethnicity—offering a rich and representative picture of what matters most to the people we serve.

Community Narrative

People want to live fulfilling lives rooted in family well-being, personal growth, career success, health, stability, and meaningful community connections. They aspire to support their children's education, care for aging parents, find rewarding work, stay mentally and physically healthy, and engage in vibrant, safe neighborhoods. Many also hope to travel, learn new skills, and contribute to civic life through volunteering and social engagement.

However, they are concerned that a range of barriers—economic pressures, social isolation, systemic complexity, and rapid societal change—are in the way of achieving those aspirations. These concerns are compounded by the pace of technological advancement, lack of accessible services, and the emotional toll of caregiving and uncertainty.

As people talk about those concerns, they talk specifically about:

- Social isolation particularly for seniors or newcomers with language barriers.
- Financial stress, including housing affordability, student debt, and cost of living.
- Concerns about community safety, infrastructure, and environmental change.
- Time constraints from work, caregiving, and daily responsibilities.
- Difficulty navigating systems, such as healthcare, education, and social services.
- Mental health struggles, stigma around seeking help, and caregiver burnout.
- Transportation and accessibility issues, especially for those without cars or with mobility challenges.
- Technology gaps, especially for seniors and parents trying to keep up with their children's digital lives.

They believe the Library needs to focus on:

- Creating opportunities that foster connection and reduce isolation.

- Offering accessible programs in multiple languages, particularly for seniors and newcomers.
- Expand digital literacy and career development resources including job search support and financial literacy education.
- Providing flexible, drop-in programming that fits diverse schedules and life stages.
- Facilitating community-building activities, such as interest groups, mentorship, and volunteer opportunities.
- Acting as a central hub for trusted information, helping the community navigate complex systems and life transitions.
- Partnering with local organizations to amplify impact and reach underserved groups.
- Supporting mental health and wellness, through safe spaces, social workers, and peer-led initiatives.

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Deborah Walker, Director Strategy & Planning

DATE OF MEETING: October 27, 2025

SUBJECT: **Strategic Plan Update**

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report “Strategic Plan Update” be received.

Community Survey

As of time of writing, the Community Survey remains open, with 3,751 responses. The Survey will close at end of day on Saturday October 25th, which is the last day of Ontario Public Library Week.

Community Conversations/Focus Groups – Insights

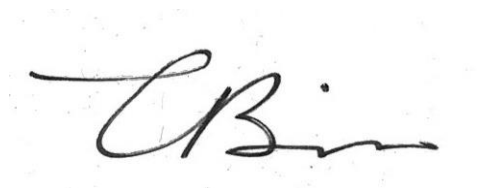
See narrative in 3.2 Presentation and Addendum.

Consultant Support

The search for a Strategic Planning Consultant is in progress. Specifications for consultant services include:

- Analyze findings of Community Survey and co-create survey report with Strategy Manager.
- Integrate multiple lines of input (from staff, community, research, trend analysis, municipal context/priorities, stakeholder input, etc.).
- Facilitate process to support leadership team in:
 - Decision-making regarding evidence-based strategic priorities going forward.
 - Developing evidence-based Vision and Mission statements.
 - Developing measurable goals and objectives.
 - Planning a strategy execution roadmap.
 - Finalizing a new strategic plan for MPL.
- Create a strategy map that provides the Library Board, community and MPL staff with a simple and clear one-page expression of MPL strategy.

In addition, and outside consultant scope, the Strategic Planning Project Manager will map the draft strategy to Board Ends and Building Markham’s Future Together to ensure alignment with our overarching strategic frameworks.

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Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

AGENDA 6.2.2

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Michelle Sawh, Director, Administration & Operational Support

DATE OF MEETING: October 27, 2025

SUBJECT: **INTERNAL MONITORING REPORT: Executive Limitation EL-2i,
Compensation and Benefits**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

This report provides the Board with an overview of MPL's practices with regard to employee compensation and benefits.

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report entitled "Internal Monitoring Report: Executive Limitation EL-2i, Compensation and Benefits" be received.

POLICY TYPE: EXECUTIVE LIMITATIONS
POLICY TITLE: COMPENSATION AND BENEFITS (EL-2i)

GLOBAL POLICY LIMITATION:

With respect to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, and contract workers, the chief executive shall not cause or allow jeopardy to fiscal integrity or public image.

INTERPRETATION:

The CEO will ensure that the Library's fiscal integrity and public image remain un-jeopardized in all matters relating to employment, compensation and benefits to employees, consultants, or contract staff.

CEO RESPONSIBILITY:

All compensation and benefits requirements are in full compliance with Board policy.

ASSERTION OF COMPLIANCE

As per the Report below, I assert that I am in compliance with this Global Policy Executive Limitation.



Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

AGENDA 6.2.2

1. **POLICY LIMITATION:** *The CEO shall not change his or her own compensation and benefits.*

CEO Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that someone other than the CEO prepares the CEO's contract of employment and affirms the CEO's compensation and benefits.

Compliance is demonstrated when a review of payroll and benefits records show no changes made to the CEO's compensation and benefits except with that consistent with system-wide established changes.

Evidence of Compliance:

The Library CEO's salary compensation is based on the Library non-union salary grid, and benefits are comparable to those provided by the City of Markham. The salary ranges for all Library employees, including those in management positions, are available as public information on the MPL website.

Per the Library's "Terms of Reference for Management and Non-union Employees Policy," annual cost-of-living increases for all Non-union staff, including the CEO, have been identical to those offered to unionized Library employees (Full Time and Part Time).

Changes to the CEO's and all staff's compensation and benefits are implemented by the Human Resources & Compensation Specialist, and overseen by the Director, Administration. The Human Resources & Compensation Specialist affirms that the CEO is compensated as per the current Non-union salary grid and non-Union benefits package.

2. **POLICY LIMITATION:** *The CEO shall not promise or imply permanent or guaranteed employment.*

CEO Interpretation

I interpret this to mean that the CEO will comply with relevant employment legislation and that the CEO will have in place Human Resources procedures that ensure equal opportunity employment and fair hiring practices.

Compliance will be demonstrated when 100% of job postings and hirings follow established HR processes including competitive interview processes.

Evidence of Compliance:

All offers of employment were made on the basis of relevant employment legislation and the Collective Agreements, where applicable. There have been no cases of "permanent employment" being offered, either explicitly or implicitly.

MPL ensures compliance with all required legislation. The Library's trained Human Resources professionals design and monitor processes that ensure recruitment is conducted objectively and hiring decisions are based on the candidates' qualifications, skills and demonstrated ability to meet the responsibilities of the position. Whenever temporary or contract employment is offered to employees, it is made for defined periods of time with specific end dates.

3. **POLICY LIMITATION:** *The CEO shall not establish current compensation and benefits which:*

AGENDA 6.2.2

- A. *Deviate materially from the geographic or professional market for the skills employed;*
- B. *Create obligations over a longer term than revenues can be safely projected, subject to losses of revenue and legally imposed restraints.*

CEO Interpretation

- A. I interpret this to mean that compensation packages are competitive with the local job market while remaining financially responsible and therefore fall within the reasonable range of established comparator markets.

Compliance is demonstrated when the Human Resources and Compensation Specialist verifies that staff have been compensated as per the Collective Agreement or Administration staff wage schedule.

- B. I interpret this to mean that the CEO does not enter into collective agreements or employment contracts that exceed a period for which budgeting or economic forecasting can be reasonably projected. I also interpret this to mean that the Library budget is considered when hiring vacant or new positions.

Compliance is demonstrated when the budget process considers available resources when making staffing or collective bargaining decisions.

Evidence of Compliance:

- A. Compensation and benefits for unionized employees are negotiated with the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) through the collective bargaining process. As is indicated above, the Non-union group has traditionally received the same cost of living increases as the Union.

The Library has collective agreements with CUPE Local 905 Markham Library Unit, covering Full-Time, Part-Time and Page employees – a separate agreement for each group. The current Agreements are on a four-year term. The current Page Agreement expired June 30, 2022, and the current Full Time and Part Time agreements expired on March 31, 2024. Traditionally bargaining with the Union commences after the expiry of the collective agreement and takes a period of time to complete. Collective bargaining has recently concluded for all three bargaining units, and we are currently awaiting ratification of all three agreements.

MPL monitors salary rates and annual cost of living increases within the Ontario public library community on an ongoing basis to ensure that its compensation levels remain competitive. A market compensation review of all positions, union and non-union, was undertaken in 2023 resulting in some pay grades receiving an uplift and all positions then being within the median range for comparator libraries.

The Human Resources and Compensation Specialist affirms that all employees have been compensated as per the Collective Agreement or Non-Union Salary Schedule.

AGENDA 6.2.2

- B. As described above, salaries and wages for unionized Library staff are negotiated through collective bargaining and are specified in the Collective Agreements. The City's Financial Services Department sets aside funding in anticipation of cost-of-living increases. The Library ensures that compensation obligations do not exceed available funding.

Personnel budgets are reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure that expenditures do not exceed available resources. MPL staff meet regularly with the Financial Services Department to ensure that actual expenditures remain within budget.

AGENDA 7.0

TO: Markham Public Library Board

FROM: Catherine Biss, CEO& Secretary-Treasurer

PREPARED BY: Susan Price, Board Secretary

DATE OF MEETING: October 27 ,2025

SUBJECT: **CONSENT AGENDA**

RECOMMENDATION:

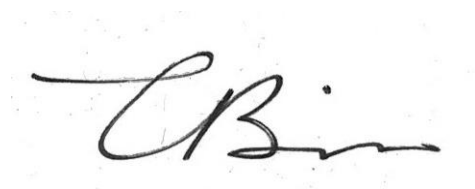
That the Consent Agenda comprising Agenda 7.0 to 7.2.1 and the same are hereby approved as written and the CEO of the Library is hereby authorized and directed to take such action that may be necessary to give effect to the recommendations as therein contained:

7.0 CONSENT AGENDA:

7.1 Declaration of Due Diligence by the CEO

7.2 Communication and Correspondence:

7.2.1 TorontoPublicLibrary.ca: [Bridge 2023/2024 Report: Impact of of Technology Services in Ontario Public Libraries](#)



Catherine Biss
CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

DECLARATION OF DUE DILIGENCE BY THE CEO

I, Catherine Biss, Chief Executive Officer of the Markham Public Library Board (the "Board"), hereby declare that to the best of my knowledge and belief, Markham Public Library is in compliance with the following from September 17, 2025 to October 21, 2025.

- 1) All wages owing have been paid to all employees of the Board;
- 2) All payroll remittances, consisting of income tax, CPP, EI premiums and Employers Health Tax relating to employee remuneration have been appropriately calculated and withheld, and promptly remitted;
- 3) All the Harmonized Sales Taxes owing have been appropriately calculated based on the Board's current operating procedures and promptly remitted on a quarterly basis;
- 4) All federal and provincial regulatory filings have been made;
- 5) The Board has been informed of any complaints of harassment, including sexual harassment, involving a staff person;
- 6) The Board has been informed of any contraventions of the Occupational Health and Safety Act;
- 7) Other than as previously disclosed to the Board, there are no actual, threatened or potential claims against the Board or its Directors.



Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer

October 21, 2025
Date