

MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Regular Meeting

Minutes of Regular Meeting held on Monday, April 27, 2026, 7:02 p.m. Virtual Meeting

Present from Board: Ms. Margaret McGrory, Chair
Mr. Edward Choi, Vice Chair
Deputy Mayor Michael Chan
Mr. Raymond Chan
Councillor Ritch Lau
Ms. Winnie Phung
Ms. Gail Vlahopoulos
Mr. Kenneth Wightman
Mr. Jay Xie

Youth Representative: Ms. Amani Patel

Regrets: Mr. Harout Manougian

Present from Staff: Mrs. Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer
Ms. Andrea Cecchetto, Director Service Excellence
Mrs. Diane Macklin, Director, Community Engagement
Ms. Michelle Sawh, Director, Administration & Operational Support
Ms. Debbie Walker, Director, Library Strategy & Planning
Ms. Megan Garza, Senior Manager, Organizational Transformation
Ms. Polly Chan, Financial Analys
Mr. David Zambrano, Senior Manager, Virtual Services
Mrs. Jennifer North, Manager, Cornell Library
Mr. Ken Chung, Manager, Angus Glen Library
Mrs. Susan Price, Board Secretary

Guest: Mr. Morgan Jones, Commissioner, Community Services,
City of Markham

1.0 Call to Order/Adoption of Agenda

Ms. Margaret McGrory called the meeting to order at 7:02 p.m.

Moved by Mr. Kenneth Wightman
Seconded by Ms. Gail Vlahopoulos

Resolved that the agenda be approved.

Carried.

1.1 **Adoption of Minutes:**

Library Board Minutes March 23, 2026

Moved by Mr. Raymond Chan

Seconded by Mr. Jay Xie

Resolved that the minutes of the March 23, 2026, Library Board Meeting be confirmed.

Carried.

1.2 **Declaration of Conflict of Interest**

None.

1.3 **Delegation**

None.

1.4 **Chair's Remarks:**

CHAIR'S INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We begin today by acknowledging the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples and their commitment to stewardship of the land. We acknowledge the communities in circle. The North, West, South and Eastern directions, the Haudenosaunee, Huron-Wendat, Anishnabeg, Seneca, Chippewa and the current treaty holders Mississaugas of the Credit peoples. We share the responsibility with the caretakers of this land to ensure the dish is never empty and to restore relationships that are based on peace, friendship and trust. We are committed to reconciliation, partnership and enhanced understanding.

Ms. McGrory asked Directors to introduce any guest staff members present.

The Chair reminded the Board that votes would need to be counted and to keep their hands raised until staff can do so.

The next Board meeting, Monday, May 25, 2026, will be in-person and will be held at the Markham Village Branch, Program Room, 6031 Highway 7 East in Markham.

AGENDA 1.1

The Chair reminded the Board that In Camera meetings are strictly confidential, and Members need to ensure they are in a private location or using headphones. In Camera Agenda item 10.0 will be moved ahead, following Chair's Remarks, in order to accommodate our guest.

10.0 **In Camera Agenda:**

10.1 To Discuss a Confidential Personnel Matter

Moved by Mr. Edward Choi
Seconded by Mr. Raymond Chan

Resolved that the Board move in camera at 7:06 p.m. to discuss a confidential personnel matter.

Carried.

The Board returned to its regular meeting at 7:40 p.m.

Moved by Mr. Edward Choi
Seconded by Mr. Raymond Chan

Resolved that the motions approved In Camera be ratified.

Carried.

Moved by Mr. Edward Choi
Seconded by Mr. Raymond Chan

Resolved that the motions approved at the Special In camera Meeting held February 23,2026 be ratified.

Carried.

2.0 **Ownership Linkage:**

2.1 Reports from Board Members
None this month.

3.0 **Board Education:**

Deferred this month to allow appropriate time for presentation and discussion of the new Strategic Plan, 2026-2031.

4.0 **Information Requested by the Board**

4.1 CEO's Highlights, April 2026
The CEO highlighted the following information items:
• **Official Plan Review-Project Launch**

AGENDA 1.1

- Required by the Planning Act to set the vision for the future of Markham. Community and Stakeholder Engagement will take place during spring 2026. Key elements of this Engagement will include Visioning Workshops, Community Pop up events and Online Engagement.
- **Emerging Trend: Edtech**
 - “Edtech” is a shortform for “education” and “technology” used to describe hardware and software designed to enhance teacher-led learning. Educators are reconsidering the impact of this use of technology in the classroom.
 - In the US, the Senate heard testimony from a Neuroscientist and Educator that over the past two decades the cognitive development of children across the developed world has stalled, and in many domains reversed, including declining IQ scores.

Moved by Ms. Gail Vlahopoulos

Seconded by Ms. Winnie Phung

Resolved that the report entitled “CEO’s Highlights, April 2026” be received.

Carried.

5.0 **Items for Decision:**

5.1 **Board Approval of 2026 Library Capital Budget Report**

The Chair asked if there were any questions from Members and asked for clarification on the redistribution of funds from physical collections (decrease) to E-resources (increase) from 2025 to 2026.

Moved by Mr. Kenneth Wightman

Seconded by Mr. Raymond Chan

Resolved that the Library Board adopts the 2026 Capital Budget of \$3,331,464 for the Library’s portion of the City of Markham’s 2026 Capital Budget; and,

That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried.

5.2 **Board Approval of 2026 Library Operating Budget Report**

The Chair asked the reason for the decrease in room rental revenues. Management explained that the group that had been renting the space for ESL

AGENDA 1.1

is using more virtual programs and there is greater need of the space for MPL programs. There was also a clarification on the Communications variance from 2025 to 2026.

Moved by Mr. Raymond Chan
Seconded by Mr. Kenneth Wightman

Resolved that the Library Board approves the 2026 City of Markham Grant in the amount of \$16,363,768; and,

That the Board approves the 2026 Library Operating Budget consisting of Library Income in the amount of \$93,589, and Operating Expenditures (excluding Personnel Ramp-ups) in the amount of \$17,294,357; and,

That upon finalization of the 2025 Library audited financial statements, the 2026 Operating Budget be adjusted to reflect the 2025 operating results; and,

That the above figures be subject to further adjustment as required throughout the year based on information received from the City of Markham; and,

That Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried.

5.3 **Board Support for CULC Letter**

The CEO informed the Board about legislation in Alberta Government's Bill 28 that would require libraries in Alberta to segregate materials that the government deems sexually inappropriate. The Bill would give the Minister of Municipal Affairs new powers to inspect public libraries, make regulations governing access to and borrowing of library materials, and issue directives to library boards regarding responsibilities that currently rest with locally appointed boards and trained library professionals. Potentially the government would also have access to customer borrowing records, a serious privacy issue. This is an attempt by the Alberta Government to censor material that it deems inappropriate by making the material difficult to access and to override the role of the library board and professional staff.

Moved by Ms. Gail Vlahopoulos
Seconded by Mr. Kenneth Wightman

Resolved that the Markham Public Library Board express its opposition to proposed legislation in Alberta's Bill 28, the Municipal Affairs and Housing Statutes Amendment Act which would transfer authority over

public library collections and customer access from locally appointed library boards and professional library staff to provincial government ministers;

And that the Board affirm its commitment to intellectual freedom, customer privacy, equitable access to information, and the principle of local governance of public libraries, consistent with the Public Libraries Act of Ontario;

And that the Board direct the CEO to communicate this resolution to the Coalition of Alberta Public Libraries, the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries, the Canadian Urban Libraries Council, the Ministers responsible for libraries in Ontario and this municipality's Members of Provincial Parliament.

Carried.

There was a request that in addition to the above-mentioned entities, that CFLA and OLA also be approached for support.

6.0 **Monitoring Performance**

6.1 **Ends:**

6.1.1 Strategic Plan Presentation

The CEO gave a comprehensive overview of the new Strategic Plan 2026-2031, the focus of which is to shape a **Thriving, Connected and Resilient Markham**:

- **Vision:** A community where everyone thrives.
- **Mission** Connecting community, inspiring curiosity, and creating possibility.
- **Strategic Priorities:**
 - Build Community and Institutional Capability.
 - Deepen Connection and Civic Belonging.
 - Navigate Change Through Purposeful Adaptation.
- **Next Steps:**
 - Strategy Finalization.
 - Implementation Roadmap.
 - Writing.
 - Communication to Staff.

Moved by Ms. Gail Vlahopoulos
Seconded by Mr. Kenneth Wightman

Resolved that the Strategic Plan Presentation be received.

Carried.

6.2 Executive Limitations:

6.2.1 Internal Monitoring Report: Executive Limitations, EL-2e, Asset Protection (assigned to Ms. Gail Vlahopoulos)

Ms. Vlahopoulos reviewed the report and was satisfied that it is complete and comprehensive. She received no questions or concerns from Board members. There were none at the meeting.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL's practices relative to MPL's Asset Protection comply with the requirements of EL-2e policy.

Moved by Ms. Gail Vlahopoulos
Seconded by Mr. Raymond Chan

Resolved that the report entitled "Internal Monitoring Report: Executive Limitation EL-2e, Asset Protection" be received.

Carried.

7.0 Consent Agenda:

Moved by Mr. Raymond Chan
Seconded by Mr. Jay Xie

Resolved that the Consent Agenda comprising Agenda items 7.1 to 7.3 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:

7.1 Declaration of Due Diligence by the CEO

7.2 Communication and Correspondence

7.2.1 YorkRegion.com: After a personal struggle, this Markham teen is leading an eating disorder advocacy clinic

https://www.yorkregion.com/news/markham-teen-leads-eating-disorder-advocacy-effort/article_07276f08-3a4e-5bab-8e8a-488251332904.html?source=newsletter&utm_content=a04&utm_source=ml_nl&utm_medium=email&utm_email=3F054A06974FC0C73696953C45ED831F&utm_campaign=yrha_90202&utm_term=latest

7.3 Statistics-Detail

AGENDA 1.1

Carried.

8.0 **Board Performance and Self-Evaluation:**

8.1 Questionnaire Results: Feedback to the Chair

The Chair thanked Board members for their feedback and provided responses to comments on the questionnaires.

Moved by Mr. Jay Xie
Seconded by Ms. Winnie Phung

Resolved that the report entitled “Questionnaire Results: Feedback to the Chair” be received.

Carried.

9.0 **New Business** (none)

10.1 Addressed after 1.4

11.0 **Adjournment**

Moved by Mr. Edward Choi that the meeting be adjourned at 8:39 p.m.