

## RMWB Library Board Meeting Minutes

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**DATE:** *January 21, 2026*

**TIME:** *6:00 pm to 8:00 pm*

**LOCATION:** *WBRL Board Room*

**ATTENDANCE:** *Board: Pratik Tripathi, Chair; Gloria Abada, Vice Chair; Julia Bennett (via Teams); Lou Ann Demers Noble; Heather Dolhanty; Ashlee Figiel; Don. Scott; Ijeoma Uche-Ezeala (via Teams); Melissa LaRose-Wark  
Staff: Melissa Flett*

**REGRETS:**

**ABSENT:**

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### **1. Treaty 8 Opening**

M. Flett called the meeting to Order at 6:00 pm.

We respectfully acknowledge that Wood Buffalo Regional Library is situated on Treaty 8 Territory, the traditional lands of the Cree, Dene, and the unceded territory of the Métis.

a. Welcome and introductions

New board members Julia Bennett, Lou Ann Demers Noble, Heather Dolhanty, Ashlee Figiel and Don Scott were introduced.

Councillor Don Scott presented thank you gifts on behalf of Mayor and Council to board members who served in 2025.

b. Adoption of Agenda

**Motion to adopt the agenda made by G. Abada /Seconded by D. Scott.  
Carried.**

c. Consent Agenda

- No items at this time.

d. Declaration of Conflict of Interest

No conflict of interest was declared.

### **2. Business Carried Forward**

#### **a. Ratification of electronic motion**

As per the Board Meetings Policy, the Board reserves the right to conduct electronic votes when needed on an urgent basis, and where the matter cannot await the next regular meeting, the Board will ratify any action taken at the next meeting.

To ensure business continuity for 2026, and in light of significant turnover on the Board, an email was circulated on December 10, 2026, requesting approval of two new signing authorities as well as the November meeting minutes. These temporary measures were necessary to maintain operational stability, close out the 2025 year-end requirements, and

support Board operations until the Organizational Meeting in January, when a new Executive could be elected.

Ij Uche-Ezeala moved, and Gloria Abada seconded the following motions:

- *“That Corinna Pirie, Jennifer Kennett, and Shazia Mughal be removed as signing authorities for the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo Library Board effective December 31, 2025, and that Pratik Tripathi and Gloria Abada be added as a signing authority effective January 1, 2026.”*
- *To approve the November 19, 2025, meeting minutes.*

The motions carried, with six board members approving. The minutes of this meeting will record the ratification of the electronic vote.

### **3. Organizational Meeting**

a. Election of Chair

D. Scott nominated P. Tripathi. P. Tripathi accepted the nomination.

No other nominations were received.

P. Tripathi was elected Chair by acclamation.

*P. Tripathi resumed the role of Chair.*

b. Election of Vice Chair

c. M. LaRose-Wark nominated G. Abada. G. Abada accepted the nomination.

No other nominations were received.

G. Abada was elected Vice Chair by acclamation.

d. Appointment of Executive Committee

P. Tripathi (Chair) and G. Abadya (Vice Chair) were appointed to the Executive Committee. The Past Chair position is currently vacant.

M. LaRose-Wark volunteered for the committee.

No other nominations were received.

M. LaRose-Wark was appointed to the Executive Committee.

e. Appointment of Policy and Administration Committee

f. Appointment of Financial and Legal Committee

M. Flett reviewed the terms of reference for both committees. Board members were appointed to committees as follows:

- Policy and Administration Committee: J. Bennett, H. Dolhanty, A. Figiel, I. Uche-Ezeala
- Financial and Legal Committee: G. Abada, J. Bennett, L. Demers Noble, M. LaRoe-Wark

#### 4. New Business

a. Board Governance Policy Review

M.Flett explained that as part of the annual policy review schedule, the Board reviews the Board Governance policies in January. As the year progresses, Board members may choose to bring back a policy for revision.

- **Board Membership and Responsibilities Policy Review**  
The policy was reviewed and no changes were made.
- **Board Meetings Policy Review**  
L. Demers Noble advised that she has a scheduling conflict on the third Wednesday of the month. The Board discussed possible options.

**Motion: To amend policy so that regular meetings of the Board take place during the fourth week of each month at 6:00 p.m. Moved by H. Dolhanty/Seconded by G.**

**Abada.**

**Carried**

- **Board Committees Policy Review**  
The policy was reviewed and no changes were made.
- **Policy Making Policy Review**  
M. Flett explained that the Board follows a regular policy review schedule, which will be presented for approval in February. She also noted that all policies approved by the Board are posted on the library website.  
The policy was reviewed and no changes were made.
- **Board Member Code of Ethics Policy Review**  
M. Flett shared that the Board Member Code of Ethics will be distributed to each Board member for signature.  
The policy was reviewed and no changes were made.
- **Orientation and Continuing Education Policy Review**  
The policy was reviewed and no changes were made.

b. Strategic Plan 2024 to 2028

M. Flett reviewed the 2024–2028 Strategic Plan, noting that it is a Board-approved document that includes a Community Needs Assessment. She explained that a consultant was used for the most recent plan due to staff capacity and outlined the Board’s role in approving the Plan of Service and participating in a strategic planning session.

c. 2025 Community Survey Results

M. Flett reviewed the 2025 Community Survey results and explained that the library conducts a community-wide survey every second year. The Board shared positive feedback on the survey results.

d. 2026 Budget and Upcoming Council Presentation

M. Flett shared that the 2026 budget and Municipal Subsidiary Grant Request presentation was scheduled for February 3, and P. Tripathi confirmed his availability to attend. She explained that the Municipality has provided first-quarter funding and that Council approval is required for the remaining funds; however, the request is being recommended for approval by the Community Investment Program, and she expressed confidence that the funding will be approved. M. Flett responded to Board questions regarding additional funding, noting that operating funds cannot be requested beyond the approved budget, while funding for capital or other items may come from library reserves or grants. These figures will be reviewed at an upcoming Finance and Legal Committee meeting during the year-end review.

## 5. Adjournment

a. Schedule date for Financial and Legal Committee meeting

The meeting was confirmed for February 19, 2026, at 5:00 p.m., to be held via Microsoft Teams.

b. Confirm the February board meeting date

The February Board meeting was confirmed for February 28, 2026, at 6:00 p.m., to be held in the Library Board Room.

**Motion to adjourn at 7:30 p.m. made by G. Abada/Seconded by H. Dolhanty.  
Carried**