

## Aurora Public Library Board MEETING

Wednesday, November 17, 2021 7:00 p.m.

Via video conference

#### **AGENDA**

- 1. Adoption of Agenda
- 2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
- 3. Minutes of:

.1 October 20, 2021 Meeting

(enclosure)

- 4. Reports
  - .1 Third Quarter Operations Report SR2021.26

(enclosure)

- .2 2022 Service and Holiday Hours Report SR2021.27
- (enclosure)

- 5. Library CEO Updates
  - .1 CEO Updates

(verbal report)

- 6. Resolution to Move into Closed Session
  - .2 Personal matters about an identifiable individual
- 7. General Business Information/Questions
  - .1 APL Updates

(enclosure)

.2 Aurora Town Square Stakeholder Update

(enclosure)

- 8. Member Announcements
- Date of Next Meeting:

Wednesday, December 8, 2021

- 10.Adjournment
- \*\* Please advise Maida Rae of regrets for attendance, by noon on November 17<sup>th</sup> by emailing <a href="mailto:mrae@aurorapl.ca">mrae@aurorapl.ca</a>.

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#### **Aurora Public Library Board**

#### MINUTES of MEETING

#### Wednesday, October 20, 2021

The Aurora Public Library Board held its regular meeting on October 20, 2021 via video conference.

Present: John Clement, Tom Connor (Chair), Councillor Sandra Humfryes,

Adam Mobbs (Vice Chair), Marie Rankel, Ken Turriff

Regrets: Councillor John Gallo

Chief Executive Officer: Bruce Gorman

Staff: Mario Baleno (IT Manager); Mary Ann Gruppuso, Manager,

Collections and Access; Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager, Community Collaboration; Jodi Marr, Manager, Customer Opportunity; Maida Rae, HR Coordinator/EA (recorder); Julie Rocca, Business Manager

The Chair called the meeting to order at 07:02 p.m.

The Board was introduced to Mary Ann Gruppuso, Manager, Collections and Access.

#### 1. Adoption of the Agenda

MOTION: **21.07.64 THAT** the agenda be approved

Moved by: J. Clement Seconded by: K. Turriff

**CARRIED** 

#### 2. <u>Disclosure of Interest</u>

#### 3. Approval of Minutes:

.1 Regular meeting of September 15, 2021

.2 APLB Finance Sub Committee meeting of October 8, 2021

MOTION: **21.07.65**Moved by: K. Turriff
Seconded by: A. Mobbs

**CARRIED** 

**THAT** the Minutes of the September 15, 2021 regular meeting and the October 8, 2021 Finance Committee meeting be

approved

#### 4. Reports

#### .1 Third Quarter Use Indicators Report SR2021.20

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **21.07.66**Moved by: M. Rankel
Seconded by: A. Mobbs

**CARRIED** 

**THAT** the Aurora Public Library Board receives the Third Quarter Use Indicators DRAFT report to

September 30, 2021 as

information

Councillor Sandra Humfryes joined the meeting at 7:18 p.m.

## .2 Financial Statement for the Period Ending September 30, 2021 Report SR2021.21

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: 21.07.67 Moved by: M. Rankel Seconded by: J. Clement

CARRIED

**THAT** the Aurora Public Library Financial Statement for the period ending September 30, 2021 be

received as information

#### .3 Aurora Public Library 2022 Budget Plan Report SR2021.22

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **21.07.68**Moved by: A. Mobbs
Seconded by: J. Clement

**CARRIED** 

**THAT** the Aurora Public Library 2022 Operating Budget redistribution between budget categories dated October 20, 2021 be approved

#### 5. <u>Items for Consideration</u>

#### .1 Accessibility Policy Report SR2021.23

A staff report was provided prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **21.07.69**Moved by: M. Rankel
Seconded by: J. Clement

CARRIED

**THAT** the revised Accessibility Policy dated October 20, 2021 be approved

#### .2 Non-Union General Wage Increase Report SR2021.24

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **21.07.70**Moved by: K. Turriff
Seconded by: A. Mobbs

**CARRIED** 

**THAT** a general wage increase of 1.4% effective April 1, 2020 be applied to the salary schedule for the continuous non-union employee group, and

**THAT** a general wage increase of 1.25% effective April 1, 2021 be applied to the salary schedule for the continuous non-union employee group

#### .3 Library Service Hours Report SR2021.25

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **21.07.71**Moved by: J. Clement
Seconded by: M. Rankel

**CARRIED** 

**THAT** the Aurora Public Library Board approve the following change to Library service hours as follows:

1. Closed December 24 and December 31 2021

#### 6. <u>Library CEO Updates</u>

#### .1 CEO Updates

A verbal report was provided at the meeting.

MOTION: **21.07.72** Moved by: K. Turriff

Seconded: Councillor S. Humfryes

CARRIED

**THAT** the Library CEO Updates be received as information

Library staff continue working with their Town counterparts on the Aurora Town Square governance plan. APL will be requesting specific blocks of time in programming rooms to dedicate to APL programs, with an Memorandum of Understanding finalized by end of 2021 to allow Library staff to plan their programming.

There are ongoing discussions with the Town of Aurora and Chandos construction on the damage to the sorter and sorter room. Chandos will pay to repair damages through their insurance, but the timing for this is to be determined.

B. Gorman will present the Library's 2022 financial outlook to the Town Finance Committee on November 15<sup>th</sup>. The Library's Finance Sub-Committee members are invited to participate in this zoom meeting.

Library management have revised operational procedures to empower staff to address difficult situations.

- B. Gorman contacted CUPE 905 National Representative to encourage 905.02 collective agreement renewal in 2021.
- B. Gorman will attend the Aurora Chamber of Commerce Annual General Meeting.

#### 7. General Business Information/Questions

.1 APL Updates and Aurora Town Square Stakeholder Updates
Articles, photographs and a project update were issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: 21.07.73

Moved by: M. Rankel
Seconded by: K. Turriff

CARRIED

THAT the APL Updates and Aurora Town Square Stakeholder Updates be received as

information

Newspaper articles and media coverage from mid-September to mid-October highlighted APL's programs and services.

The Town of Aurora provided an update on the Library Square construction project in an email to the Board.

#### 8. <u>Member Announcements</u>

#### 9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, November 17, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.

#### 10. Adjournment

MOTION: **21.07.74**Moved by: M. Rankel
Seconded by: J. Clement

CARRIED

THAT the meeting be adjourned

at 8:48 p.m.

T. Connor B. Gorman

Chair Chief Executive Officer



## Aurora Public Library Board

## REPORT SR2021.26

SUBJECT: THIRD QUARTER OPERATIONS REPORT

FROM: Bruce Gorman, Chief Executive Officer

**DATE:** November 17, 2021

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the *Third Quarter Operations Report to September 30, 2021* be received as information.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The quarterly Operations Report has been revised to reflect the goals set out in the Library's Strategic Plan 2017-2021 "Place of Possibilities". The Library's management team have identified goals relating to the Strategic Plan for 2021 and provided updates on the established timelines and targets in the attached spreadsheet, *Aurora Public Library 2021 Strategic Plan Goals*.

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Aurora Public Library 2021 Strategic Plan Goals

Assisted by: Executive Leadership Team

Maida Rae, Human Resources Coordinator/EA

Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer

Strategic Direction 1. Build Community								
1.1 Strengthen Town and partner organization relationships, working with all stakeholders as construction begins for Aurora Town Square	Bruce	80%	Q1	Q4	Working with town staff and stakeholders to imagine and implement the possibilities	Governance ongoing with Town and Culture Centre including IT and new meeting spaces. Working on meeting room MOU and first meeting on IT  Working with Museum and culture centre on programming  Partnering with Town on programming  Providing library cards to town staff	On track	Continuing
1.2 Community collection access points	Mary Ann	30%	Q1	Q4	Vending machine browsing collections (ex. SARC, Go station)  Holds pickup lockers (ex. Senior's Centre)	Quotes obtained  Initiated discussions with MetroLinx and GO for new book return bin & possible book vending machine located inside Aurora GO station  Developing RFP to submit to MetroLinx	On track	Continuing
1.3 Fine-Free for all material	Mary Ann	100%	Mar	Jun	Communications plan developed for staff and customers Updated Circulation and Fees Policy for Board approval	Following our successful fine-free on children's material in August 2019, remove overdue fines for rest of collection material  Studies (and our own experience with children's material) show this does not reduce instance or timeliness of returned material  Policy approved by Library Board June 2021	On track	Achieved
1.4 Plan and deploy online reading challenges	Jodi	100%	Jan	Sep	Annual Summer Reading Club for all three age categories  Establish seasonal reading challenges for each age category.	Launched Winter Challenges for adults and kids Jan 2021. Launched ongoing reading challenges for all age categories (Read Woke, 1000 BBK, 100 BBG) Jan 2021. Launched Spring Challenges (Apr 1 <sup>st</sup> ). Launched Summer Reading Challenge	On track	Achieved

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2	2021 GOALS AND OBJECT	TVES				
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS % START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

						for adults, teens and children (SRC) as well as Evergreen Awards Challenge, July 2021. Launched Fall Reading Challenges for Adults and kids Sept 2021.		
1.5 Explore ways to utilize library volunteers during pandemic	Jodi	100%	Jan	Sep	Engage with 100 volunteers and assist them in earning 350 hours	These success measures are based on achieving % of what we provided volunteers in 2019. Pandemic Pen Pals, Academic Assistance from a Distance, Acts of Kindness, TAG all running in January 2021.  Q1 – We engaged 168 volunteers and assisted them in earning 340 hours for this quarter. Goal has been achieved earlier then anticipated. Q2 – We engaged 220 volunteers and assisted them in earning 615.5 hours for this quarter.	On Track	Achieved
1.6 Develop three new community partnerships	Reccia	100%	Jan	Nov	Partnerships attained	A number of longstanding partners are not able to collaborate for the foreseeable future due to pressures they are experiencing due to the pandemic. (The Arts Music Store, The York Region Food Network, Theatre Aurora).  New relationships and alliances will be pursued.  Orillia Storytellers  York Hills Centre for Children, Youth and Family I Family Services York Region  SLGBTQI Community & Partnership Developer (CPD) I Inclusive School and Community Services  Aurora Black Community Association  ACCES Employment  Ontario Provincial Police  Aurora Sports Hall of Fame	On track	Achieved

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2021	GOALS AND OBJECT	IVES					
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS %	START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

1.7 Increase	Reccia	100%	Q1	Q4	25 targeted newcomer responses	Carried forward/adjusted from 2020	On track	Achieved
newcomer/multicultural						If not able to gather the responses live,		
involvement with APL						investigate collection of responses via Zoom		
						interviews.		
						Questions developed with CCLI (Jan)		
						Zoom interviews problematic due to		
						access to computers. Phone interviews		
						are being conducted as an alternative		
						Interviews began end-January		
						Survey Monkey developed (March)		
						• 19 completed surveys (April 7)		
						26 completed surveys (May 26)		
						Research completed (June 8)		
						Document delivered to CEO (August 24)		

Strategic Direction								
2. Place of Possibilities								
2.1 Oversee completion of	Bruce	70%	Jan	Dec	Successful operations of the	Town assisted in setup of library pickup	On track	Continuing
renovation project in year					Library during all phases of	window.		
two, integrate Aurora					construction			
Town Square						Weekly meeting with Town, Colliers Project		
considerations and present					As permitted explore	Leaders, and Chandos		
the benefits of the space					opportunities to utilize new			
					spaces	Regular communication with CAO and senior		
						town staff		
						Presented reopening plan to Board		
					<i>y</i>	Demolition at library near completion May		
						2021		
				400				
						South doors installed for staff		

						Reviewing winter 2021 operations		
2.2 Develop Capital Plan based on outcomes of the Growth Accommodation Study.	Bruce	80%	Jan	Oct	Approval of GAS. Support of the Town. Development of a ten-year phased plan. Comprehensive financial plan.	Carried forward from 2020  Meeting with VG+ Architects to discuss design considerations in Sept 2021  +VG currently working on updated 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor plan  Ongoing discussions with town staff	On track	Continuing
2.2.1 Reimagine staff work spaces	Bruce		Sept	Nov	A work environment where staff work efficiency and collaborate effectively.	As above		
2.2.2 Explore sustainability options	Bruce		Sept	Nov	Introduction of measures that are reflective of environmental stewardship.	As above		
2.3 Redesign website and mobile platform to improve customer experience	Mario	30%	Jan	Q1 2022	Increase number of visitors as well as average time spent on a page. Reduce our bounce rate (number of people who only view one page then leave the site)	Redesign online presence to provide customers with an excellent experience regardless of the device type they are using. This will increase usage and better display our programming and material offerings.  Simplify and optimize content updates and website management to reduce staff workload.  Fully integrate website with the Library catalogue and event management system.  Formed website redesign team.  Bibliocommons has been chosen as our new website vendor.	At Risk This project will be completed by the beginning of Q2 next year.  Deferred to 2022	

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRAR	RY 2021 GOALS AND OBJECT	IVES				
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS % START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

						Biblioweb instance has been created; the team is working on the website structure and layout.  The project team has begun training.  Website design is underway.  Content is being migrated from the existing site to the new site.		
2.4 Explore Podcast/Filming/Editing studio capabilities in the Library	Jodi	100%	Q2	Q4	Consider a defined space and equipment being used by staff to film, edit and record programming.	Explore a studio in the Library where staff and customers can create and edit their content.  This will assist in creating higher quality content for our social media channels.  Decision to work with floating space within the library due to current physical constraints and the use of a backdrop/screen, partnering with Community Collaboration staff team.	On track	Achieved
2.5 Seamless integration of collections in APL website	Mary Ann	60%	Q3	Q4	Home and landing pages feature min. 25% collection content (digital promo, reading lists, etc.)	Work with IT, marketing, and information staff to incorporate collection promotions seamlessly into the new website design Incorporated into 2.3 goal.  Mary Ann assuming responsibility, joined project team	Reference Goal 2.3	
2.6 Develop a comprehensive programming plan and delivery model	Jodi	50%	Q1	Q4	Completed program plan that details annual projects and defines delivery guidelines Outline a consistent framework for marketing deadlines (Q2)	Carried forward from 2020  Additions made with the expansion into virtual programming.  Programming plan is in place, delivery model to be updated (virtual, in person, hybrid)	On track	

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2	2021 GOALS AND OBJECT	TVES				
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS % START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

2.6.1	Provide an informative plan that communicates dates, delivery model and required resources	Jodi	50%	Q2	Q4	Develop a calendar of annual events (Q2) and refine template for program submissions for manager and marketing (Q2)	Documents in development and being added to on a monthly basis.	On track	
2.6.2	Deliver engaging Creative Studio plan	Jodi	60%	Q3	Q4	Define Creative Studio programming objectives (Q1) Develop a course of programming specific to the Creative Studio resources and mandate (Q3)		On track	
2.6.3	Research and if feasible implement a professional virtual programming environment	Jodi	25%	Q2	Q3	Evaluate current virtual delivery tools (social media outlets, etc.) Engage expertise to provide best practices and advise changes to delivery. Implement changes and streamline procedures for all staff who deliver virtual programming. Staff training for enhanced delivery of virtual programming (Q2) See 2.4 above as a tie in.	Equipment purchased and staff are testing and training.	On track	
2.7 Im	plement marketing plan	Reccia/Jodi	30%	Sept	Nov	New website that meets the integrated needs of marketing programs, collections, brand identity	Marketing Plan developed in 2020 This will define required resources.  Include branded Go Station Return Bin (installed) and branded Tent for children's programming (completed).	At Risk	Deferred
hy	evelop a process for brid virtual/live ogramming	Reccia/Jodi	50%	Sept	Dec	Develop synchronous & asynchronous virtual presentations from live events	Pending restrictions, this may be either the planning process or actual delivery.  This could translate into the need to expand Marketing to include an employee/contract as needed with video expertise.  Reference 2.4	COVID/ Construction pivot	

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 202	21 GOALS AND OBJECT	TIVES					
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS %	START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

						Customer Opportunity team working on hybrid delivery, in process of developing and testing		
2.9 Develop an active partnership with Niagara College (Armoury)	Reccia	100%	Jan	Dec	New program(s) that promote the goals of both organizations	, , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , , ,	On track	Achieved
						Youdale copied on my response (August 9) as there seems to be some confusion on her part as to what the		

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 203	21 GOALS AND OBJECT	TVES				
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS % STA	RT END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

						<ul> <li>Tapings scheduled for Q4 as pilot for ongoing series (Sept. 10)</li> </ul>		
2.10 Pilot an "In-Residence" program with an "Editor- in-Residence" or an "Author-in-Residence"	Reccia	100%	April	August	3 workshops with feedback	Pilot to develop other "in-residence" opportunities in podcasting, technology, etc.  • Engaged Greg Ioannou as Editor-in- Residence Series delivery April – June • https://www.editors.ca/directory/greg- ioannou  • Workshops completed (June 10; feedback on submitted work completed August 31)	On track	Achieved
Strategic Direction 3. Organizational Capacity								
3.1 Implement a new Performance Management Program that aligns with APL Goals and Objectives	Bruce	80%	May	Dec	Implement a streamlined program that provides specific concise feedback for employees to take action.	Reviewing system-wide program for consistency	On track	Deferred to 2022
3.2 Implement a Succession Planning Program for APL to identify, develop, and retain leadership talent	Bruce	90%	May	Dec	Identify talent and develop plans for progression	Using red light/ green light methodology for management group	On track	
3.3 Investigate the viability of enhancing our communications solution	Mario	100%	Q3	Q4	VOIP transition completed, including training for staff to highlight features for remote work	Expand the telephone system to include an Internet based service to allow staff better communications in a remote work environment.  Enable staff laptops and mobile devices to receive and make phone calls on Library extension as if they were located in the office.	Moving to a new phone system is not viable at this time. We will review this once the migration to the town's network is completed.	Achieved

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2023	l goals and object	IVES					
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS %	START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

3.4 Provide staff the tools to create high quality media content	Mario/Jodi	100%	Jan	Q4	Research kit contents, including consulting with staff  Purchase kit contents, package and make available to staff	Create "Studio in a Bag kits" for staff who film for Library social media  Put together a set of kits for staff to use when filming for Library social media. These kits will include required equipment to produce high production quality content for Library social channels.  Investigating appropriate equipment for staff.  1 kit has been purchased and is being rolled out to staff for training and testing.  Staff are now using the kit for live and prerecorded videos with great success.	On track	Achieved
3.5 Present economic impact of Aurora Public Library	Julie		Sep	Dec	Financial value of library services to community	Implement value calculator and undertake marketing of economic impact for the community	At risk Defer until after construction and pandemic	Deferred
3.6 Migrate HR and payroll functions to new ADP software (HRIS)	Julie	100%	Jan	June	Optimize staff utilization and cost effectiveness	Align with Town HRIS ADP system currently in pre-implementation phase	On track	Achieved
3.7 Conduct a scheduling software needs assessment and implement if feasible	Ashley/Jodi	100%	Jan	Nov	Managers to identify specific scheduling requirements	Frontline managers to develop "must haves" list for scheduling requirements.  Needs assessment being developed.  Determine if an in-house solution acceptable or external software required (awaiting ADP implementation)	On track	Achieved
3.8 Implement paperless processing of payables, payroll and audit function	Julie	100%	Jan	Mar	Timely processing of financials; reduction of staff time and paperless (greening initiative)	Authorized financial authority for payables under \$5,000 to adhere to due dates and improve turn around time	On track	Achieved

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2023	l goals and object	IVES					
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS %	START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

3.9 Expand remote access	Mario	100%	Jan	Q3	All designated staff given tools and training completed.	Transition staff to become more mobile by providing the necessary technology to work seamlessly and effectively in an offsite location.  Staff will receive laptops with VPN access, docking station (for when working in the office), Monitor/keyboard/mouse (to be used at home)  Received quotes from three vendors  Laptops have been deployed to appropriate staff members  VPN access has been granted to staff, they will no longer be using Teamviewer.  Staff have been trained on using VPN	On track	Achieved
						and remote access  All staff have been provided remote access		
						equipment and training has been completed.		
3.10 Adapt circulation and customer service in light of all changing environments	Mary Ann/Jodi	90%	Q1	Q4	Maintain customer satisfaction as measured by quantitative use of services (within range of +/- 5%) as well as qualitative customer satisfaction feedback	Remain highly flexible, adaptable, and service oriented as our environment changes rapidly due to COVID and construction project.  • For example, adapt holds pick-up service each time construction location changes.  • Monitor best practices for return quarantine, browsing, touch-free checkout, etc. as pandemic evolves.  Contactless Pickup Window opened on Jan 20/21	On track	
						Continuing to reinstate merchandising and resources placed on hold while closed to the public (Express Best Sellers, New Items, etc.)		

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 20	21 GOALS AND OBJECT	TIVES				
ACTION	RESPONSIBLE	STATUS % START	END	SUCCESS MEASURE	NOTES	ON TRACK/AT RISK ACHIEVED

	Provide programming sources for Goal 2.6 ove	Jodi	60%	Q3	Q4	Defined training via learning modules or documentation for all Customer Opportunity staff.	Modules in process via Niche Academy	On track	
3.11.1	Provide focused staff training to grow skills in delivering virtual programming	Jodi	60%	Q3	Q4	Defined set of virtual programming delivery competencies and expectation for staff.  IPS and Librarians provided with individualized and directed training to address gaps.	Research virtual program delivery competencies and explore what other libraries or industries require of staff to succeed in these tasks/roles.  Through one-on-ones identify individual staff program delivery needs.  Evaluate staff virtual program delivery and provide directed feedback.  Compare IPS and Librarians to the competencies and train on gaps.	On track	
3.11.2	Develop technology programming support of virtual environment	Jodi	50%	Q2	Q4	All IPS and Librarians trained on the developed virtual programming modules.	Identify the tools used for virtual program delivery and develop training for each tool (i.e. Zoom, Facebook, etc.)  Digital Literacy Assistant developing training for new equipment.	On track	
3.11.3	Review human resources in support of virtual programming, social media, and digital literacy	Jodi	50%	Q3	Q4	Define new competencies that expands into virtual programming, social media and digital literacy		On track	
3.11.4	Develop staff branding, visibility and virtual presence to support relationship building and enhance	Jodi	50%	Q2	Q4	Train all IPS and Librarians in personal brand development that aligns with APL's vision.	Research branding and personal marketing training for staff.  Customer Opportunity staff have individualized Bibliocommons logins to communicate the RA recommendation to customers.	On track	

the customer experience						Display wall of Staff Picks in development.  Researching available training opportunities for staff.		
3.12 Explore and Implement a project management solution to manage team projects	Jodi	100%	Q1	Q3	Complete a needs assessment Review software that addresses team needs Select and roll out a solution for project heavy teams	Detail project management software needs and have IT assist in researching and implementing a solution that integrates with existing technology.  Develop needs assessment. Piloting (free version) of Asana for Customer Opportunity team.  Asana purchased for Customer Opportunity and in use.	On track	Achieved
3.13 Consolidate staff training resources into an online LMS	Jodi	60%	Q1	Q4	Launch APL Education platform with 5 active modules.  Have 15 staff complete all modules that apply to their job functions.	<ul> <li>Carried forward from 2020</li> <li>Explore using the Niche Academy platform to develop the LMS.</li> <li>Niche academy purchased and developing learning modules for staff, branding and layout for courses.</li> <li>Courses in development for onboarding, Readers' Advisory and circulation training.</li> </ul>	On track	



#### **Aurora Public Library Board**

#### REPORT SR2021.27

**SUBJECT:** 2022 SERVICE and HOLIDAY HOURS

**FROM:** Bruce Gorman, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: November 17, 2021

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

That the 2022 Service and Holiday Hours Report be approved.

#### **BACKGROUND**

The Library has established public service hours which are adjusted in the course of each year to reflect times of closure resulting from statutory and public holidays, the Collective Agreement and discretionary closures. Any resulting adjustments in service hours are advertised in advance. The APL website includes advance information for the entire year. Accordingly, the public service hours are being confirmed for 2022.

#### Times of Closure:

Monday, February 21 Friday, April 15 Sunday, April 17 Monday, April 18 Monday, May 23 Friday, July 1 Monday, August 1 Monday, September 5 Monday, October 10 Saturday, December 24 Sunday, December 25 Monday, December 26	New Year's Day Family Day Good Friday Easter Sunday Easter Monday Victoria Day Canada Day Civic Holiday Labour Day Thanksgiving Christmas Eve Christmas Day Boxing Day New Year's Eve	Statutory holiday Public holiday Statutory holiday Discretionary holiday Holiday as per Collective Agreement Statutory holiday Statutory holiday Public holiday Statutory holiday Statutory holiday Statutory holiday 12:00 noon as per Collective Agreement Statutory holiday
Saturday, December 31	New Year's Eve New Year's Day	12:00 noon as per Collective Agreement Statutory holiday

Since 2016, the Library has conducted staff development days, a single day closure for training purposes. Due to COVID related restrictions on gatherings, APL did not host a staff development day in 2021. For 2022, we will adhere to public health and

safety guidelines to determine optimal staff training and development opportunities. Consideration will also be made to minimize the impact of the closure on the public, and once details are confirmed, any change in operating hours will be widely publicized.

#### **Regular Weekly Service Hours:**

```
Monday 09:30 a.m. - 09:00 p.m.

Tuesday 09:30 a.m. - 09:00 p.m.

Wednesday 09:30 a.m. - 09:00 p.m.

Thursday 09:30 a.m. - 09:00 p.m.

Friday 09:30 a.m. - 06:00 p.m.

Saturday 09:30 a.m. - 05:00 p.m.

Sunday 01:00 p.m. - 05:00 p.m. (January 2 - May 15 & September 11 - December 18)
```

It should be noted that due to the pandemic, our current operating hours are Monday to Saturday,  $11\ a.m.$  to  $6\ p.m.$  As circumstances warrant, we will return towards our regular service hours.

#### **CONCLUSION**

Most of the proposed closures result from requirements related to statutory and public holidays and to the Collective Agreement. There will be two discretionary closure dates in 2021 – a possible Staff Training Day and Easter Sunday, which is observed as a holiday within the community and has traditionally been a day of closure.

Assisted by: Maida Rae, HR Coordinator/EA

Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer

## Aurora Town Square *Updates*







Figure 2: Ground Floor north wall of new Cultural Centre has been poured and stripped

### **Activities Since Last Update**

- Excavation works within the square took place in early October, but the installation of civil and mechanical services was stalled due to delayed material deliveries and inclement weather.
- Mechanical and electrical rough-ins continued within the 2nd floor addition space connected to the Library as the exterior envelope continues to be enclosed with roofing works complete and installation of large windows forthcoming.
- Erection of the 2nd floor walls and columns has begun for the Church Street School addition, while the ground floor foundations have begun to be backfilled.
- The waterproofing membrane has been installed within the rooftop reading garden.
- Interior wall and ceiling framing has commenced within the 2nd floor expansion spaces.

#### **Activities For Next Period**

- Continue interior wall and ceiling framing within the 2nd floor expansion spaces connected to the Library
- Installation of large windows in new spaces connected to the Library
- Continue mechanical and electrical rough-ins in 2nd floor expansion spaces
- Continue Church Street School addition structure installation
- Continue installation of infrastructure/services in the square

## TOWN OF AURORA

## NOTICE BOARD

October 14, 2021



## **Council & Committee Meetings**

Date	Time	Location	Meeting
Thursday, October 14	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Committee of Adjustment
Tuesday, October 19	5:45 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, October 19	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	General Committee
Wednesday, October 20	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Aurora Public Library Board
Wednesday, October 20	7 p.m.	Video Conference	Anti-Black Racism and Anti-Racism Task Force
Tuesday, October 26	5:45 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council Closed Session (if required)
Tuesday, October 26	7 p.m.	Council Chambers	Council
Thursday, October 28	6 p.m.	Video Conference	Aurora Appeal Tribunal

\*All meetings held electronically are as per Section 19. i) of the Town's Procedure By-law No. 6228-19, as amended, due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Meetings will be available to the public via live stream only on the Town's YouTube Channel. In-person public attendance at meetings is not permitted at this time.

#### **New public health instructions for** organized sports facilities

Effective 12:01 a.m. on October 1, 2021, and until further notice unless otherwise specified, all persons responsible for facilities where organized sports are played and/or practiced must:

- 1. Require each person, age 12 years and older, at the point of entry, who attends the indoor area of the facility for the purpose of (a) actively participating in organized sports, (b) coaching, officiating at organized sports or volunteering, or (c) spectating at organized sports, to provide identification and proof of being fully vaccinated against COVID-19 or a valid medical exemption.
- 2. Comply with all other requirements under the Reopening Ontario Act and its regulations that apply to the facility.

The Town of Aurora will comply with the new instructions and request identification and proof of vaccination, or a valid medical exemption for all facility entrants aged 12 and up; however, to ensure that users have time to comply with the new guidelines, the Town will take an education-first approach until November 1, 2021.

Activities related to organized sports have the potential to enhance COVID-19 transmission through close contact, forceful exhalation, prolonged exposure, crowded indoor spaces and masks and face coverings removed during physical activity.

Verifying proof of vaccination for persons 12 years and older in the facilities noted above, in accordance with York Region's Letter of Instruction, will strengthen protection for York Region communities by helping curb the spread of COVID-19.

Continue to visit york.ca/covid19 for the latest information on related COVID-19 information or dates for clinics to receive the COVID-19 vaccine.

#### **Virtual seminar offered through Aurora Public Library**

On Thursday, November 18 at 7 p.m. meet the fabulous Phiona Durrant at Entrepreneurs in Residence and learn about what made her an entrepreneurial success in Canada.

Register at https://bit.ly/300TPo1

### **E-Waste Collection**

Have you recently replaced a computer, phone or television? Drop-off all of your unwanted or obsolete electronic devices to be fully recycled at the Joint Operations Centre - 229 Industrial Parkway North on Saturday, October 23 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Due to COVID-19, residents will be required to remove all e-waste from their vehicles and dispose in the collection bin.

For more details visit aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling.

## **Community Services**



#### **Winter 2022 Program Guide**

Our Winter 2022 Program Guide has programs and activities for all ages. The guide will be distributed to all Aurora households with The Banner on November 4.

Online registration for recreation and aquatic leadership programs starts on November 8.

Full details available at aurora.ca/recguide. Pre-registration is required for all programs and drop-in activities at aurora.ca/eplay.

#### **Aurora Family Leisure Complex pool times**

Daytime leisure swim times available at the AFLC pool for families with young children.

Pre-registration is required at aurora.ca/eplay. For AFLC pool swim times schedule, please visit aurora.ca/aquatics.

#### **Aurora Family Leisure Complex drop-ins** and skating activities

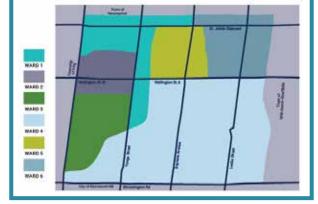
Recreation centres are now open for indoor sports activities. Pre-registration is required. For AFLC Drop-In schedule, please visit aurora.ca/aflcdropin.

For Skating Activities schedule, please visit aurora.ca/skating.



The Town of Aurora will be switching to a ward system in 2022. When residents vote in the 2022 Municipal Election, they will be voting for a Mayor and one Ward Councillor who represents their ward indicated on the map below. In total, there will be a Mayor and six ward councillors elected.

To find out which ward you live in, enter your street address into the interactive map at aurora.ca/wards.





#### **Notice to residents regarding trail** construction

The Town of Aurora Operational Services – Parks Division will be constructing a trail and boardwalk within the Town-owned open space lands (Marsh Creek Valley lands) west of Joseph Hartman Crescent in accordance with the Town's Trails Master Plan.

Construction of the Trail will commence mid-October 2021. We hope to have the trail and boardwalk completed by mid-December, weather permitting. The trail will be our standard 3.0m wide gravel trail and the boardwalk will be 2.4m wide with similar construction to the boardwalks recently completed in the David Tomlinson Nature Reserve south of this site. Some minor grubbing of vegetation is required; however, no large trees will need to be removed. Naturalization plantings will be provided where the trail is in close proximity to rear yards.

The trail connection at Joseph Bales Parkette will remain open to access the trails further south. We anticipate the trail connection to Joseph Hartman Crescent from the north will remain open as well, however, temporary closures may be necessary to facilitate construction.

For questions or comments, please contact Gary Greidanus, Senior Landscape Architect at ggreidanus@aurora.ca or call 905-727-3123 ext. 3227.

## **What's Happening**







### The Town of Aurora is moving to a bag tag system.

Effective January 2022, residents who place more than three (3) bags or containers out for pick up will be required to purchase and place a bag tag on any additional bags.

Any waste exceeding the limit will require a bag tag to be attached to each bag.

Example: AURORA TOWN OF AURORA 001257

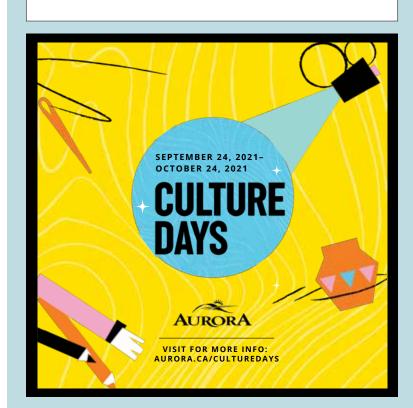
Bag Tags cost \$5 per tag and can be purchased at Aurora Town Hall (100 John West Way).

Bag tags must be visible and wrapped around the neck of the bag.

\*\*Does not apply to the limit of 5 bulky items\*\*

For more information, please visit: aurora.ca/wasteandrecycling





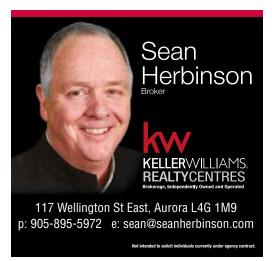
### **Aurora Town Hall**















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Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 22 No. 2 905-727-3300

The Auroran.com

Week of October 21, 2021



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## Downtown condo development should incorporate retail: Councillors

BY BROCK WEIR **EDITOR** INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's vision for its downtown core aims to not only draw people in but give them plenty of reasons to stay – including places to live and shop.

But a new proposal for a six-storey condominium complex just north of Yonge and Wellington has caused some Council members to underscore this vision, calling for developers to take their plans back to the drawing board.

Council, at last week's Public Planning meeting, sent plans for the condo at Yonge and Irwin Avenue back for further revisions after nearby residents spoke out about how the development might have a negative impact on the long-standing neighbourhoods on both Irwin and Machell.

Their concerns ranged from the impact construction might have on their properties

- including flooding - along with increased traffic and sight lines.

Council agreed with many of the concerns raised and voiced some of their

Initial plans for the development were filed with the Town in October of 2020 and have undergone many changes since then, including the reduction of one unit proposed for the building for a total of 136 with an equal number of parking spaces.

Continued on page 8



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One Book One Aurora culminates with author talk Saturday

## **GRAND FINALE**

Indigenous author Drew Hayden Taylor, who penned this year's One Book One Aurora selection "Chasing Painted Horses" will help bring down the curtain on the 2021 Community Reads program with a virtual author talk this Saturday.

**Contributed photo** 



BY BROCK WEIR **EDITOR** 

For the past nine months, Drew Hayden Taylor's acclaimed novel Chasing Painted Horses, has weaved its magic across the community as the 2021 selection for the Aurora Public Library's One Book One Aurora campaign.

Inspired by the Ojibwe author's novel, which is described as a "magical, fablelike" story about a distant memory of

Continued on page 22





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One Book One Aurora culminates with author talk Saturday



Chasing Painted Horses by Drew Hayden Taylor has received significant community attention as the 2021 One Book One Aurora selection, says Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager of Community Collaboration for the Aurora Public Library.

#### From page 1

an unusual little girl, Danielle, who leaves a lasting impression by drawing a breathtaking horse in a weekly drawing competition, readers have not only passed the book along to others, but used it as a muse for their own writing, photography, and discussion.

Now, One Book One Aurora will culminate with its grand finale this Saturday, October 23, with a virtual author talk with Drew Hayden Taylor himself.

"I think this was the absolute best book selection for this year," says Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager of Community Collaboration for the Aurora Public Library. "Many of the books [in contention for the 2021 One Book One Aurora campaign] were very dark and during the time of COVID, people had so much on their minds, so much stress and tragedy in everyone's life, my 'beta

readers' in the community all wanted something that had meat in it, had substance, but was not depressing.

on their own personal birth totem.

"He spoke about creating birth totem from your own background so

"I think because Chasing Painted Horses could be read on so many different levels. Like a fable, like a fairy tale, it can be looked at in terms of societal change, poverty, Indigenous communities... and it can be looked at from an artistic perspective, the whole aspect of creation and process versus product because it allowed people to read it in so many different ways."

Throughout the duration of One Book One Aurora (OBOA) 2021, Ms. Mandelcorn says she regularly received emails from people who were relating to what they were reading. One email was received after an OBOA-hosted workshop on Birth Totems with Oneida Nation of the Thames artist Todd Jamieson who led participants in creating their own woodlands-style drawing based

"He spoke about creating birth totems from your own background so it was not cultural appropriation and what the meaning of the birth totems are and what they meant to him as an Indigenous person. One of the participants sent in a response and said, 'That was just incredible. I felt as if my spirit had been cracking with exhaustion and that just filled me up. It was a beautiful way to learn about a beautiful culture.' I have never had such heartfelt, non-solicited responses from people in the community.

"Our writing workshop with Marnie Maguire (on 'literary graffiti') had people from all around the world who participated along with our local community. There was one woman who had a British accent, we heard birds in the background and one of the participant asked, 'Where are the bird sounds?' She said, 'I'm in Somerset, England, let me show you...'

and we looked at this beautiful magic garden. While you were sitting at home on your computers there was an expression, certainly, of community."

Saturday's author talk will be another extension of community.

Leading the discussion, Ms. Mandelcorn will share with Mr. Hayden Taylor some of the themes that came up as the community read his work, while the audience will be able to ask questions of their own through the Zoom platform.

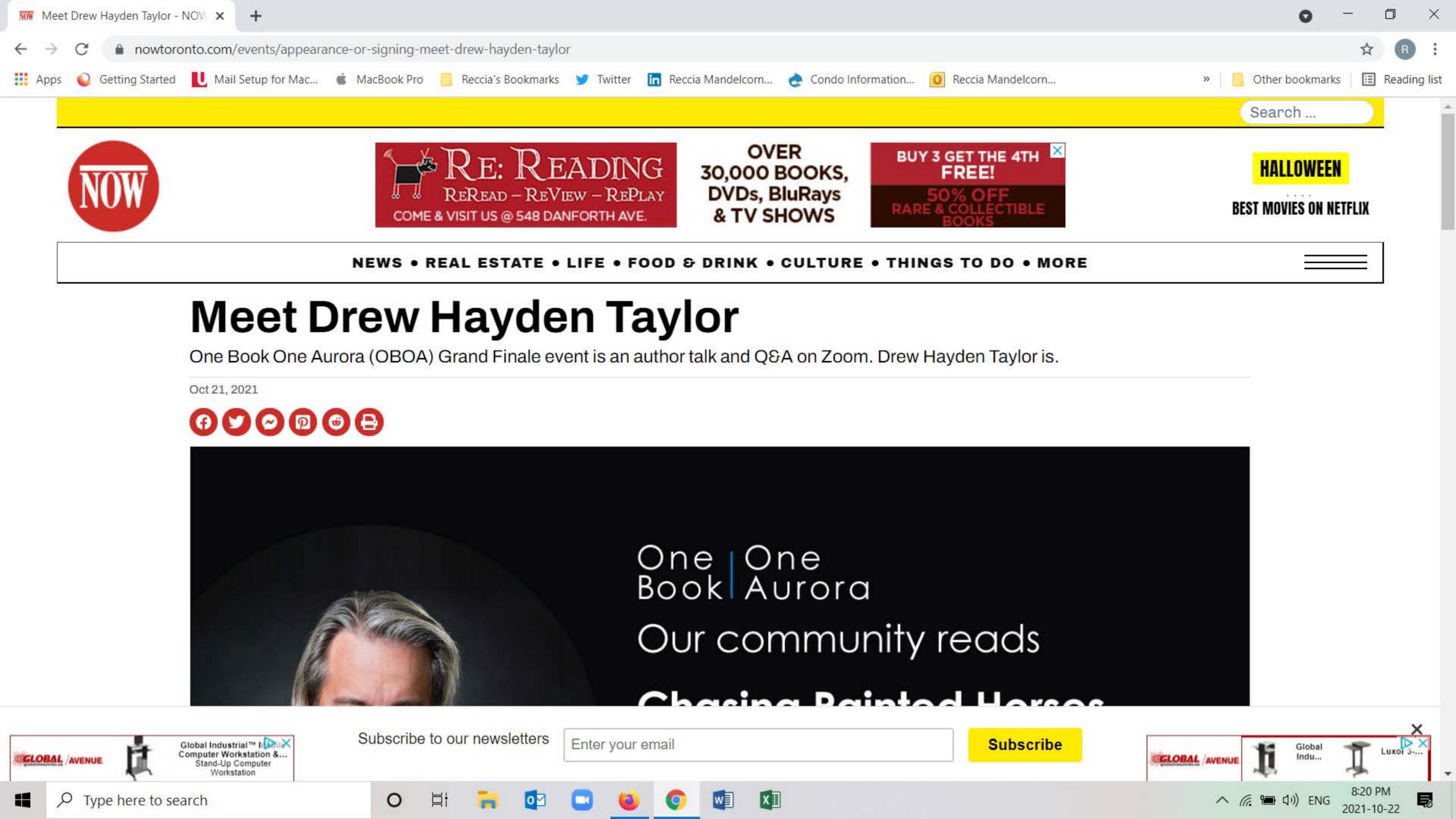
"He is such an interesting man and such a literary presence in the Canadian scene, whether it has to do with his plays, his films, his novels, his political columns—it is the chance of a lifetime to meet him and even if they haven't read the book, this will be an experience that people won't want to miss," says Ms. Mandelcorn.

"Personally, I really want to know where the reader exists when he is actually writing. I would like to know because he writes in so many different genres. I have received emails from people who have seen some of his plays performed almost 20 years ago. I would be very interested in when he is writing if he's thinking about the reader at the other end. Is he writing for himself because it comes out as a process, or does the reader actually play a conversation in his mind as he is writing?

"We would love everyone to come out for this. We're excited to be able to offer this. There are still copies available if you want to read the book and if you want to share the book and OBOA is over, pass it along to a friend or a neighbour. Just because One Book One Aurora 2021 will be done, the sharing of reading continues, so please continue to pass it on and let's keep everybody talking!"

The OBOA Grand Finale, Meet Drew Hayden Taylor, will take place over Zoom this Saturday, October 23, at 2 p.m. Register at bit.ly/3pzC8mV. For more information, visit onebookoneaurora.com.





## One One and the WINNERS are...











Auroran and The Aurora Public Library are pleased to announce the winners of the 2021 One Book One Aurora photo contest. photographers year, answered a challenge inspired by Drew Hayden Taylor's "Chasing Painted Horses" to capture beauty in unexpected places and readers certainly delivered. (Top Row, Left) First prize in the adult category goes to Ellen Davidson with "Flora", a statue engulfed by nature. (Top Row, Right) Second prize went to Sara **Bedal** who captured these "enigmatic eyes staring out from a building in Toronto's Yorkville district." (Second Row, Left) First prize in the youth category went to this image created by Zander Chernev. (Second Row, Right) Second prize in the youth category was awarded to Amelia **Mendoza** who captured a pollinator garden.



## Who does what in our community

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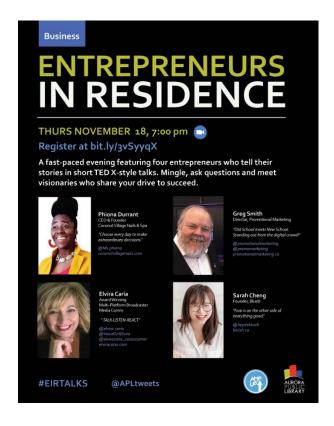
15483 Yonge St. Aurora

www.brightskylights.ca

### **WATER**







## Aurora Public Library presents Entrepreneurs in Residence

Becoming an entrepreneur is an exciting adventure, but it is never without risk. Tips, back stories and networking opportunities with four entrepreneurs who share your drive to succeed.

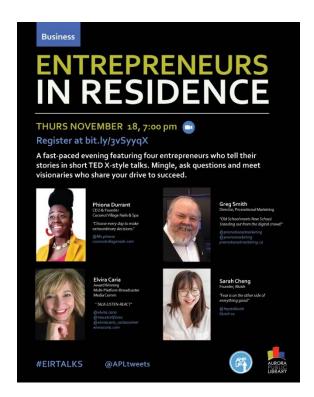
November 18, 7 p.m.

Register at https://bit.ly/300TPo1





## News



Nov 18 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

**ENTREPRENEURS IN RESIDENCE** 





# The Aurora Museum & Archives is remembering...

## Voices from the Past!

Using the same technology as the phonograph, this hard wax cylinder with its felt-lined storage tube (86.39.1c,f) was the recording medium for the Executive Editphone, an early 20th century Edison dictation machine. A user could record their voice onto the cylinder and listen back to their recordings later for transcription. The cylinders would hold just two minutes of audio, and could be erased by a machine that would shave the outer layer of wax making it ready for a new recording.

Becoming an entrepreneur is an exciting adventure, but it is never without risk. The current global pandemic has overturned the best of business plans, causing chaos and uncertainty. Still, entrepreneurs continue to follow their dreams and creatively respond to challenges even in the toughest times.

Having lived all my adult life in Library Land, risk-taking has never been part of my skill-set. In fact, I'm just one step away from becoming the little old lady who keeps her money safe under her mattress. But I have always viewed entrepreneurs as a subset of artists, creating stories in their business models that are full of adventure, drama and inspiration.

Phiona Durrant is the CEO of Coconut Village Nails and Spa. She lives the tagline of "choosing every day to make extraordinary decisions." Over the years, Phiona has reinvented herself as an entrepreneur since moving to Canada from Jamaica. And as a Black woman, she has an important personal perspective to share. Phiona gives back to the community as founder and president of the Aurora Black Community Association. She is also a Board Director, Aurora Chamber of Commerce and Aurora BIA, and a member of the York Advisory Council.

Greg Smith is a sales and marketing professional with over 32 years of experience in the field. As the Director of Promotional Marketing, Greg understands how to leverage marketing and advertising costs



## Welcome to Library Land

By Reccia Mandelcorn

through partnership and networking. An early developer of the use of promotional marketing, his tagline "Old School meets New School. Standing out from the Digital Crowd" promises concrete answers gained from a lifetime of experience. Greg is an active volunteer in our community, a prior Board member of APL, and is currently the president of Music Aurora.

Elvira Caria is an award winning multi-platform broadcaster who has never met a microphone she wasn't comfortable in front of. When not on stage, Elvira is a Professor at Humber College's School of Media Studies. Elvira has sat on a number of charity boards, where her philanthropic and volunteer side has garnered her a slew of awards, including the City of Vaughan Civic Hero award and The Portraits of Giving in York Region. "Doing things" the Caria way is simple: Talk to people. Listen to what they have to say. React to demonstrate your connection.

Sarah Cheng's story as founder of BLUISH is one of resilience. When

Sarah gave birth to her baby girl, she had to find a way forward to a work/life balance. You may have seen Sarah's beautiful tulle skirt designs in Vogue magazine or on Dragons' Den where she successfully pitched to Arlene Dickinson. A successful entrepreneur, Sarah believes "fear is on the other side of everything good." BLUISH supports charities and organizations that are aligned with their values, including Sick Kids Hospital, Markham Stouffville Hospital, Yellow Brick House and International China Concern.

Whether you are a budding entrepreneur, or someone, like me, who loves storytelling, you won't want to miss meeting Phiona, Greg, Elvira and Sarah at a virtual Entrepreneurs-in-Residence, Thursday, November 18 at 7pm. Short presentations followed by Q&A. Tickets are available via Eventbrite at bit.ly/3jx5sKx

What I've been reading:

- Missed Connections by Brian Francis
- Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer
- The Reason You Walk: a memoir by Wab Kinew

Reccia Mandelcorn is the Manager, Community Collaboration at Aurora Public Library. The opinions expressed in this column reflect her personal thoughts about the engagement of community with their public library.



## CHRISTINE'S CHRONICLES

Christine Elliott, MPP Newmarket-Aurora

November has quickly arrived and I am so happy to share some exciting news for our community.

As you may know, on October 22, our government, in consultation with the Chief Medical Officer of Health, released A Plan to Safely Reopen Ontario and Manage COVID-19 for the Long-Term, which outlines the province's gradual approach to lifting remaining public health and workplace safety measures by March 2022.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, Ontario has taken a cautious approach to reopening to protect the health and safety of Ontarians. Our plan will ensure we replicate this success and take a gradual approach that will protect our health system capacity, prevent widespread closures, keep our schools open and support Ontario's economic recovery. This is exciting news for our local residents and businesses.

We know that the COVID-19 pandemic has been challenging for many individuals and businesses in our community, and as we look to the future it is vital that we create opportunities for people to find good jobs and thrive. Last week the Aurora Chamber of Commerce officially launched its new Business Recovery Hub, which received a \$463,500 investment from our government through the Skills Development Fund. The Business Recovery Hub supports the development and growth of businesses by providing personalized training, development and mentorship for entrepreneurs and business owners. Our government is proud to support initiatives like this to help our local entrepreneurs and business owners create and sustain great jobs.

In addition, as part of our plan to end hallway health care, our government is investing \$375,000 to help Margaret Bahen Hospice continue to provide compassionate end-of-life services and care to people and their loved ones in Newmarket and across York Region. This one-time funding represents a 36 per cent increase in the province's annual investment in Margaret Bahen Hospice. This investment will help people in Newmarket and across York Region receive the respect, dignity and care they deserve at every stage of their lives, while ensuring the hospice has the tools it needs to continue to provide high-quality care throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

It's hard to believe that we're already mid-way through fall. Remembrance Day is now just around the corner, and like many of you, I truly cannot thank our veterans and Canadian Armed forces enough for their incredible service and sacrifice. These heroic men and women represent the very best of who we are as Canadians. Everywhere we look, members of our community are starting to wear poppies. The poppy is a visible symbol of the extraordinary courage and profound sacrifice that these heroes have made for us and a tradition that brings us together as Ontarians. On November 11, please continue this tradition and take a moment to thank our veterans. Lest we forget.

Should you have any questions or require additional information, please do not hesitate to contact my office at 905-853-9889 or by emailing Christine. Elliottco@pc.ola.org.

### Halloween in Review

I think we can all agree that Halloween 2020 was a bit of a bust.

Last year, the weather was cool, but dry, and it was Saturday, with no school night curfews in sight. The conditions were perfect.

But despite this, the streets were virtually empty. Walking the dog that evening during prime trick-or-treating time, in half an hour I saw one child accompanied by his parents. For the first time ever in Aurora, we had no kids at our door.

Of course, this was not surprising. Although the second wave was on the wane, the pandemic was in full swing, and vaccines were still months away. People spent the evening huddled inside their homes.

As one who enjoys the costumes and excitement of Halloween, it was a bit depressing.

This year I was hoping would be different. Maybe not back to normal, but better.

It was certainly heartening to hear officials confirming in early October that with vaccinations up, and cases trending down, Halloween was back on. Of course, the usual pandemic protocols of masks, social distancing, and all the rest would apply to trick-or-treating.

But what really struck and encouraged me in the weeks leading up to Halloween this year was the abundance of people decorating their houses.

There are always some decorations out there, but in 2021 they seemed to



## **INSIDE AURORA**

Scott Johnston

have multiplied manyfold.

Out walking and driving around Town, I encountered no end of displays.

There were mock cemeteries, with tombstones, skeletons, caskets and spooky lighting effects. There were witches and bats. There were giant spiders in webs. There were zombies, and a whole host of the undead. There were those inflatable things with interior lighting, some of them huge, ranging from pumpkins to evil characters. There were signs with messages such as "beware" and "enter at own risk." And there were more ghosts hanging from trees than I can ever remember.

And pumpkins, lots of pumpkins. Some were even carved weeks ahead of the 31st. As these gourds tend to rot fairly quickly once carved, this resulted in some toothy jack-o-lantern grins becoming somewhat gummy over time. But they were still eerie.

One couple I met who were decorating the front of their house told me that they were getting it done early to ensure that the kids saw it on their way to school over the following two weeks, and knew that if they came by on October 31, they were guaranteed a good treat.

Another man with an impressive yard display of skeletons and inflatable ghouls said he did it for both his kids and those of his neighbours. Although he didn't admit it, I expect he also did it for himself.

As we saw in a recent Auroran story, some people who went especially all out decorating their places encouraged donations to the food bank and other charities from those who dropped by to take a look. My hat is off to all Aurorans who went above and beyond this year to get in the spirit, and help kids (and the rest of us) feel a little more normal. Great job, everyone.

As we now know, Halloween made a successful return last Sunday. There were maybe not quite as many kids kids were out as usual, but doorbells were rung, spookiness ensued, great fun was had, and much candy consumed, no doubt followed by a few sugar highs and upset stomachs.

An encouraging thing to come out of all this is that perhaps all the decorating, visible enthusiasm, and increased safe social contact of Halloween will carry over into the upcoming holiday season in December.

If so, we're a little closer to a return to normal.

Feel free to e-mail Scott at: machellscorners@gmail.com

## THIS WEEK'S NEW POLL

Are you eager to get a COVID-19 vaccine booster?

www.theauroran.com
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Yes No Unsure

YES NO UNSURE 81% 13% 6%