



Aurora Public Library Board
MEETING
Wednesday, October 19, 2022
7:00 p.m.
Via video conference

AGENDA

1. Adoption of Agenda
2. Declaration of Conflict of Interest
3. Minutes of:
 - .1 September 21, 2022 Meeting *(enclosure)*
4. Reports
 - .1 Third Quarter Operations Report SR2022.22 *(enclosure)*
 - .2 Third Quarter Use Indicators Report SR2022.23 *(enclosure)*
 - .3 Financial Statement for period ending September 30, 2022 SR2022.24 *(enclosure)*
5. Items for Consideration
 - .1 Library Service Hours Report SR2022.25 *(enclosure)*
 - .2 2023 Library Board Meeting Schedule SR2022.26 *(enclosure)*
 - .3 Electronic Monitoring Report SR2022.27 *(enclosure)*
6. Library CEO Updates
 - .1 CEO Updates *(verbal report)*
7. General Business Information/Questions
 - .1 APL Updates *(enclosure)*
8. Resolution to Move into Closed Session
 - .1 Labour relations or employee negotiations
9. Member Announcements
10. Date of Next Meeting: **Wednesday, November 16, 2022**
11. Adjournment

**** Please advise Maida Rae of regrets for attendance, by noon on October 19th by emailing mrade@aurorapl.ca.**

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89180474288>

Meeting ID: 891 8047 4288

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Aurora Public Library Board

MINUTES of MEETING

Wednesday, September 21, 2022

The Aurora Public Library Board held its regular meeting on Wednesday, September 21, 2022 via video conference.

Present: Tom Connor (Chair), John Clement, Adam Mobbs (Vice Chair), Marie Rankel, Ken Turriff

Regrets: Councillor John Gallo, Councillor Sandra Humfryes

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 07:04 p.m.

1. **Adoption of the Agenda**

MOTION: **22.06.38**

THAT the agenda be approved

Moved by: M. Rankel

Seconded by: A. Mobbs

CARRIED

2. **Disclosure of Interest**

3. **Resolution to Move Into Closed Session**

.1 Labour relations or employee negotiations

MOTION: **22.06.39**

THAT the Board move into Closed Session to discuss labour relations or employee negotiations

Moved by: K. Turriff

Seconded by: M. Rankel

CARRIED

At 7:05 p.m. the Board moved into Closed Session.

MOTION: **22.06.40**
Moved by: K. Turriff
Seconded: J. Clement
CARRIED

THAT the Board return to Open Session

At 8:19 p.m., the Board returned to Open Session.

MOTION: **22.06.41**
Moved: K. Turriff
Seconded: A. Mobbs
CARRIED

THAT the Board approve the recommendations of the 2022 Staff Compensation Review dated September 21, 2022

4. Approval of Minutes

- .1 Regular meeting of April 13, 2022
- .2 Regular meeting of June 22, 2022
- .3 APLB Finance Committee Meeting September 14, 2022

MOTION: **22.06.42**
Moved by: A. Mobbs
Seconded by: K. Turriff
CARRIED

THAT the Minutes of the April 13 and June 22, 2022 regular meetings and APLB Finance Committee meeting minutes dated September 14, 2022 be approved

5. Reports

.1 *Financial Statement for period ending March 31, 2022 SR2022.13*

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

.2 *Second Quarter Operations Report SR2022.14*

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

.3 *Second Quarter Use Indicators Report SR2022.15*

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

.4 *Financial Statement for the Period Ending June 30, 2022 SR2022.16*

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **22.06.43**
Moved by: A. Mobbs
Seconded by: M. Rankel
CARRIED

THAT the Aurora Public Library Board receives the second quarter reports numbered SR2022.13 - SR2022.16 as information

6. Items for Consideration

.1 *Non Union Benefit Update Report SR2022.17*

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **22.06.44**
Moved by: K. Turriff
Seconded by: J. Clement
CARRIED

THAT the Non-Union Benefit
Update Report be approved

**.2 *Disconnecting from Work Policy Report
SR2022.18***

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **22.06.45**
Moved by: M. Rankel
Seconded by: A. Mobbs
CARRIED

THAT the Aurora Public Library
Disconnecting From Work Policy
be approved

**.3 *Personnel Provisions for Non-Union and
Management Staff Policy Report SR2022.19***

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **22.06.46**
Moved by: J. Clement
Seconded by: K. Turriff
CARRIED

THAT the *Personnel Provisions for
Non-Union and Management Staff
Policy Report* be approved

**.4 *Aurora Public Library Hybrid Work Policy
SR2022.20***

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **22.06.47**
Moved by: M. Rankel
Seconded by: K. Turriff
CARRIED

THAT the Aurora Public Library
Hybrid Work Policy be approved

.5 *Draft Operating Budget Report SR2022.21*

A staff report was issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **22.06.48**
Moved by: J. Clement
Seconded by: A. Mobbs
CARRIED

THAT the Aurora Public Library
Draft Multi Year Operating Budget
Summary for Fiscal Years 2023-
2026 dated September 21, 2022
be approved

Thank-you to Business Manager Julie Rocca and the rest of the management team for their work in preparing the multi-year budget.

B. Gorman also thanked the members of the APLB Finance Advisory Committee for their in-depth review of the multi-year budget details.

7. Library CEO Updates

.1 *CEO Updates*

A verbal report was provided at the meeting.

8. General Business Information/Questions

.1 *APL Updates and Aurora Town Square Stakeholder Updates*

Articles and photographs and a project update were issued prior to the meeting.

MOTION: **22.06.49**
Moved by: M. Rankel
Seconded: J. Clement
CARRIED

THAT the Library CEO Updates, APL Updates and Aurora Town Square Stakeholder Updates be received as information

CEO Update

Construction Project:

Work on the Yonge Street Library entrance continues to progress.

Library management are close to finalizing an MOU regarding room usage/scheduling and will meet with Town staff to review the scheduling software and room booking process.

The IT supplies for Town Square are expected to arrive in November. The Library's IT Manager and CEO will be finalizing a SLA to ensure the required level of service for APL.

Construction staff are working to permanently correct an issue that had led to sewer back-up issues in the foyer washrooms.

Library Board members will be invited to the Phase I opening, and B. Gorman will share details once they are finalized.

APL Programs:

The 2022 APL Summer Reading Club (SRC) was once again very successful, with higher than anticipated numbers and great feedback from participants. Library staff hosted 48 programs (one per day of SRC) for over 2000 attendees.

The Community Collaboration team will be presenting at the OLS Virtual Conference this week on a project collaborating with the Social Planning Council in York. The project resulted in a four episode podcast series on the Housing Crisis in York Region.

APL will once again host a municipal All Candidates' Meeting (virtually) this Sunday from 2 – 4 p.m.

Book Locker:

Staff continue to review book locker options and locations as part of the Library's Capital Plan.

Aurora Town Square and Media Updates:

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

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

9. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 7:00 p.m.

10. Adjournment

MOTION: **22.06.50**

Moved by: A. Mobbs

Seconded by: M. Rankel

CARRIED

THAT the meeting be adjourned
at 9:00 p.m.

T. Connor
Chair

B. Gorman
Chief Executive Officer



Aurora Public Library Board

REPORT

SR2022.22

SUBJECT: ***THIRD QUARTER OPERATIONS REPORT***

FROM: Bruce Gorman, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: October 19, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

That the *Third Quarter Operations Report to September 30, 2022* 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 2022 and provided updates on the established timelines and targets in the attached spreadsheet, *Aurora Public Library 2022 Strategic Plan Goals*.

ATTACHMENTS:

Aurora Public Library 2022 Strategic Plan Goals

***Assisted by: Executive Leadership Team
Maida Rae, Human Resources Coordinator/EA***

*Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer*

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

| ACTION | RESPONSIBLE | STATUS % | START | END | SUCCESS MEASURE | NOTES | ON TRACK/AT RISK | ACHIEVED |
|---------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|-------|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| Strategic Direction 1. Build Community | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 Pandemic/Post Pandemic Library | Bruce | 90% | Q1 | Q4 | Additional open hours Restart in-library programming. Return to regular hours. | <p>Introduced vaccination policy</p> <p>Manage omicron variant shutdown including up to 9 staff off at the same time</p> <p>Pilot evening pickup window hours.</p> <p>Maintaining pickup window service through 2022.</p> <p>Provincial government removal of restrictions on March 9</p> <p>Provided N95 masks and rapid tests to staff</p> <p>Review related policies and procedures</p> <p>Encouraged staff to wear masks as restrictions lifted</p> <p>Monitoring current increase in staff with COVID including numerous cases into July</p> <p>Supported staff throughout with compassion and action</p> <p>Guided, supported and assisted ELT members</p> <p>Prepared for future breakouts</p> <p>Reviewing hybrid working models</p> | On track | |

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

| ACTION | RESPONSIBLE | STATUS % | START | END | SUCCESS MEASURE | NOTES | ON TRACK/AT RISK | ACHIEVED |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|----------|-------|-----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|----------|
| 1.2 Research placement of satellite collections in the community | Mary Ann | 60% | Q2 | Q4 | Identify 3 potential locations for satellite collections in the community. Develop RFP for Book Locker. | 3 potential locations identified – evaluated and SARC is the preferred location Re-established discussions with Metrolinx and local community organizations. Determine services to be offered at the satellite locations i.e. holds pickup, browsing collection and/or returns | On track | |
| 1.3 Increase customer use and staff knowledge of eResources | Mary Ann | 75% | Q1 | Q4 | Increase usage of databases by 5% Review one database a month with Access Team staff | Used different channels to promote eResources – Social media, e-newsletter, New website – rotating monthly promotion of different databases Review Cloud content –changed purchase strategy and increased “shelf” displays 6 databases reviewed with Access Team Staff. | On Track | |
| 1.4 Hidden Stories of York Region Podcast Project | Reccia | 100% | Q1 | Q3 | Completion of four episodes in collaboration with the Social Planning Council of York Region | <i>HSYR</i> shares stories about lived realities, community issues and innovative solutions. Conversations will tackle challenges as well as identify solutions and actions for change. APL will support with storyboarding, production and marketing. Theme of Housing to run for four episodes. Presented at OLS conference on this project. (Sept. 22, 2022) | | Achieved |
| 1.5 In-Library Settlement Worker (monthly) *Pilot Project | Reccia | 100% | Q2 | Q4 | Attendance from community Evaluation to expand/discontinue pilot | Monthly on-site settlement worker in partnership with Library Settlement Partnerships. Can be increased to bi-weekly if there is community interest. LSP to evaluate response in September. Pilot continuing into 2023 (monthly) | | Achieved |
| 1.6 Present economic impact of Aurora Public Library on the Town | Julie | 75% | Q2 | Q4 | Showcase financial value to community | Implement value calculator and undertake economic impact study | Deferred to 2022 | |

| Strategic Direction 2. Place of Possibilities | | | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|------|-----|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|----------|
| 2.1 Redesign website and mobile platform to improve customer experience | Mario | 100% | Jan | May | 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) | <p>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.</p> <p>Simplify and optimize content updates and website management to reduce staff workload.</p> <p>Fully integrate website with the Library catalogue and event management system.</p> <p>Formed website redesign team.</p> <p>Bibliocommons has been chosen as our new website vendor.</p> <p>Biblioweb instance has been created; the team is working on the website structure and layout.</p> <p>The project team has begun training.</p> <p>Website design is underway.</p> <p>Content is being migrated from the existing site to the new site.</p> <p>Staff preview to begin mid February 2022.</p> <p>Public preview Q2 2022</p> | Deferred to 2022 On Track | Achieved |

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

| ACTION | RESPONSIBLE | STATUS % | START | END | SUCCESS MEASURE | NOTES | ON TRACK/AT RISK | ACHIEVED |
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| | | | | | | <p>(2021 Marketing Plan implementation to be completed pending website redesign).</p> <p>Staff preview completed and public preview began April 4.</p> <p>New website successfully launched in May.</p> | | |
| 2.2 Aurora Town Square Integration | Bruce | 80% | Q1 | Q4 | <p>Integration of network with Town</p> <p>Signed Rooms MOU</p> <p>Signed Network SLA</p> <p>Opening of Yonge St. Town Square entrance</p> <p>Integrate new programming spaces</p> | <p>Library space handover in Fall 2022</p> <p>Opening ceremony of Town Square (Library segment) in Fall 2022</p> <p>Grand opening Town Square in 2023</p> <p>Negotiated Library exclusive use of Magna and Lebovic for 2022</p> <p>Member of Town Square Opening Committee</p> <p>Continue participation with Town Square Programming Committee</p> <p>Acquired new book drop to be relocated to Church street. Town will assist</p> <p>Continue fundraising discussions with Town</p> <p>Continue regular Town Square operational meetings</p> <p>Rooms MOU in final stage with legal</p> <p>Commence Network SLA discussions towards SLA, APL overlay, and demarcation</p> | On track | |

| ACTION | RESPONSIBLE | STATUS % | START | END | SUCCESS MEASURE | NOTES | ON TRACK/AT RISK | ACHIEVED |
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| | | | | | | <p>Ongoing meeting with Town on network integration underway</p> <p>Finalizing cost efficiencies with Town</p> <p>Provided input on parking requirements for customers and staff</p> <p>Renewed staff parking arrangement with Trinity Church</p> <p>Ensured Library foyer was retiled</p> <p>Reviewing security gate requirements for 2nd floor corridor</p> <p>Selected Library foyer furniture</p> <p>Preparing to open on July 4 with regular hours. Facilities operational including updated washrooms, the sorter room, and staff lunchroom</p> <p>Assisted in ensuring accessible customer parking</p> <p>Ensured service levels and regulations were maintained regarding customer washroom access</p> <p>Negotiated ongoing access to Church Street entrance through winter 2022</p> | | |
| 2.3 Develop Capital Plan | Bruce | 90% | Q1 | Q3 | Integration of new furniture and millwork | Explore synergies with Town Square | Continuing to 2023 due to pandemic, construction and | |

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

| ACTION | RESPONSIBLE | STATUS % | START | END | SUCCESS MEASURE | NOTES | ON TRACK/AT RISK | ACHIEVED |
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| | | | | | <p>Integration of existing look and feel of Library and Town Square</p> <p>Grow with the needs and desires of residents of Aurora</p> <p>Full costing</p> <p>Complete timeline</p> <p>Intelligent lockers and satellite browsing in Aurora</p> <p>Community led</p> | <p>Continue to provide input on Town Square furniture</p> <p>Consider sustainability options</p> <p>Meeting with VG+ in Oct</p> <p>Final plan being prepared for ELT is in final stage</p> <p>Provide sequencing and cost assessments</p> <p>Provide timelines</p> <p>Inquire on Town capital budget</p> | <p>other space considerations</p> <p>On track</p> | |
| 2.4 Investigate early literacy centre possibilities | Mary Ann/Jodi | 25% | Q3 | Q4 | Develop a design plan of possible early literacy additions to the children's area | Review current best practices. Reached out to TPL. Identified List of Vendors. | On Track | |
| 2.5 Career Fair | Reccia | 100% | Q1 | Q2 | Event delivered (virtual) Wed. June 22, 4-6pm 83 attendees | Working with our partners (YRP, OPP, Access Employment, etc.) this event provides career options including the trades, entrepreneurship, and corrections. | | Achieved |
| 2.6 Enhance digital signage solution | Mario | | Q3 | Q4 | <p>3 additional digital signage panels installed in Library.</p> <p>Additional digital signage panels installed outside of the Library in the bridge and new building.</p> | Consider signage in new building and in the bridge and the corridor | Return from Parked Items 2020 | |
| 2.7 Explore deploying new children's technologies | Mario/Jodi | 20% | October | December | Enhance children's learning experience by engaging with new technology. Alignment with STEAM. | <p>Tethered iPads to replace AWE stations</p> <p>Osmos</p> <p>Met with Playaway Tablets.</p> <p>Investigating Samsung Kids, Osmos.</p> <p>Purchased Samsung tablets to further explore</p> <p>Using Samsung Kids with purchased Play Store apps</p> | On Track | |

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

| ACTION | RESPONSIBLE | STATUS % | START | END | SUCCESS MEASURE | NOTES | ON TRACK/AT RISK | ACHIEVED |
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| 2.8 Investigate circulating non-traditional collections | Mary Ann | 100% | January | September | Expand our children's science and technology collections by introducing a new collection that supports STEAM skills development with interactive learning at home. | Backpacks ready to be processed, then circulated. Track circulation from March to September. Rollout deferred to June. Backpacks circulated an average of 4x from June to October. | | Achieved. |
| 2.9 Deliver engaging Creative Studio Plan | Jodi | 60% | Q1 | Q4 | Define Creative Studio programming objectives (Q1) Develop a course of programming specific to the Creative Studio resources and mandate (Q3) | As the Creative Studio has been closed since 2020 we have not been able to fully explore the programming potential of this space. Priorities for programming have required attention in operational areas. | Continuing in 2022 due to pandemic | |
| Strategic Direction 3. Organizational Capacity | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 Improve work collaboration by moving staff from locally installed Microsoft Office to the Microsoft 365 cloud based solution. | Mario | 90% | Jan | Q4 | Cloud based collaboration solution deployed to all staff. Email moved from locally hosted server to the cloud. | M365 testing licenses have been purchased Server has been purchased and is being configured for hybrid deployment Hybrid configuration complete Migration of staff email and accounts to M365 has started. | On Track | |
| 3.2 Develop a new APL Strategic Plan | Bruce | | Q2 | Q4 | Increased reach Enhanced use Improved value | Review existing plan for fit, relevance, success, and future Consider timing (end of Board cycle and unique times coming out of pandemic) Develop team | | |

| ACTION | RESPONSIBLE | STATUS % | START | END | SUCCESS MEASURE | NOTES | ON TRACK/AT RISK | ACHIEVED |
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| | | | | | | Identify strategic position and trends SWOT Consider approach – refresh, outsourcing Develop plan Incorporate Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Develop strategies re: Indigenous Relations Mental Health Marketing and Communication | | |
| 3.3 Implement new Performance Management Plan for managers and staff | Bruce | 90% | Q1 | Q3 | Improve customer experience Enhance staff satisfaction and output Enhance real time feedback Improve process efficiency | Introduce new model, process and updated semi annual and annual engagement Introduce regular and impromptu feedback and coaching in real time Alignment with strategic plan Performance as a positive experience Work with Town on ADP module Inform through CEO performance process Follow with management | On track | |
| 3.4 Investigate Volunteer Management Solution | Jodi | 20% | Q1 | Q4 | Develop a needs assessment and seek IT input on software solution Recommend a final solution | Investigate a volunteer management solution and if feasible implement. Created a needs assessment to identify the right software. | | |

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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| 3.5 Develop a Merchandising Plan | Jodi/Mary Ann | 50% | Q1 | Q4 | Develop a merchandising plan for the library to enrich user experience. Increase the number of displays and improve user engagement with passive Readers' Advisory. Increase physical fiction and digital circulation by 5%. | Train staff on how to maintain the visual standards. Create a display schedule Create standard display guidelines Recommend possible new display solutions Consider online content | On Track | |
| 3.6 Consolidate staff training resources into an online LMS | Jodi | 80% | Q1 | Q4 | Launch APL Education platform with 5 active modules. Have 15 staff complete all modules that apply to their job functions. | Carried forward from 2020 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore using the Niche Academy platform to develop the LMS. Niche academy purchased and developing learning modules for staff, branding and layout for courses. Courses in development for onboarding, Readers' Advisory and circulation training. Launched 4 staff courses with a focus on training Customer Opportunity Staff. 46 staff have completed modules across the 4 courses. | Deferred to 2022 | |
| 3.7 Develop a 4 Year Operating Budget for (2023-2026) | Julie | 90% | Q3 | Q4 | Deliver a fiscally responsible operating budget to provide optimal library services for the community. | Presentation to Council and Committee in Q4 | | |
| 3.8 Further develop staff branding, visibility and virtual presence to support relationship building and enhance the customer | Jodi | 75% | Q1 | Q4 | Train all IPS and Librarians in personal brand development that aligns with APL's vision. | Research branding and personal marketing training for staff (completed 2021). Customer Opportunity staff have individualized Bibliocommons logins to | Deferred to 2022 | |

AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY 2022 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

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| experience by finding the right training/facilitator | | | | | | communicate the RA recommendation to customers (ongoing from 2021). Display wall of Staff Picks (completed 2021). Researching available training opportunities for staff | | |



Aurora Public Library Board

REPORT

SR2022.23

SUBJECT: *THIRD QUARTER USE INDICATORS DRAFT REPORT*

FROM: Bruce Gorman, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: *October 19, 2022*

RECOMMENDATION

That the *Aurora Public Library Board* receives the *third Quarter Use Indicators DRAFT Report to September 30, 2022* as information.

The Library closed March 17, 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic; Virtual programming commenced April 17, 2020; Curbside pickup of holds began May 25, 2020; limited in-library services resumed July 5, 2021.

To adapt to the Aurora Town Square construction project and the pending winter weather, on Tuesday October 13, 2020 pickup of holds moved inside the facility to the Magna Room and on Monday, December 7, 2020 due to internal construction by the Town, to the Lebovic Room.

When Ontario went into a province-wide lockdown on December 26, 2020, libraries were permitted to continue offering curbside pickup. Due to the Town's construction project, the Library was not able to resume pickup of holds until Wednesday, January 20 when a new window for holds pickup was installed at the south end of the building on Church Street. For the convenience of customers, a new return slot was installed at the same location.

On April 8, 2021 the province enacted a provincial emergency and stay-at-home order; no change in service delivery was required.

On July 5, 2021 APL welcomed customers back with in-library computer use, study tables and browsing collections: Monday through Saturday, 11:00 am – 5:00 pm.

Holds pickup hours remained the same for curbside, in-library and window pickup: Monday through Saturday, 11:00 am – 6:00 pm.

On March 15, 2022 hours for window pickup were extended on Tuesdays and Thursdays to 8:00pm.

On March 21, 2022 in alignment with the province's end of the mask mandate, staff and customers were no longer required to wear a mask in the facility or at the pickup window. The greeter position at the temporary entrance was eliminated. Customers accessed public workstations without sanitization by staff between sessions.

On July 4, 2022 regular library hours (excluding Sundays) resumed for in-person service. The window pickup was maintained for the convenience of customers.

BACKGROUND

One of the Library's chief priorities is to ensure we remain relevant and responsive to our community. A key component of advancing this priority has been to gather, analyze and interpret our quantitative data with the understanding that the numbers do not always reflect the qualitative usage and benefits of library service.

Aurora Public Library has tracked use indicators for many years with the actual indicators evolving over time. New and emerging technologies continue to impact the indicators and serve to demonstrate the diverse nature of customer usage of collections, programs and services.

The Library depends on the reporting by vendors or site for metrics on database sessions, Niche Academy and some social media. Metrics for the Niche Academy are provided by the vendor without detail as to unique/all users or time spent viewing the learning videos.

Metrics for programs are provided by Library staff or community partners. Metrics for virtual programs present unique challenges. While we can more closely measure attendance through registered platforms like Zoom and Google Classroom, analytics for FB attendance report views of one-minute duration. Programs delivered on the Niche Academy are counted as programs delivered that month; then can be accessed as Niche Academy views at any time after. The Niche Academy also includes views by staff for training purposes. Films screened do not account for multiple viewers within a household, so the counts are typically under-reported.

APL's use indicators that report one-minute views over-represent engagement, but also under-represent viewers potentially watching together. However, this is consistent with the metrics all libraries provide for the provincial annual survey. Metrics are taken end-month, so online programs viewed into the next month are not counted.

One interesting observation is that virtual programming knows no boundaries and APL programs are being enjoyed by participants beyond York Region and even Canada. Zoom workshops have included participants from England, India and Mexico and the United States.

The Use Indicators serve two important purposes:

- tracking changes and trends in library use patterns for planning collections, programs and services
- fulfilling the annual reporting requirements of the Province of Ontario for public library boards

The Library Board is provided with quarterly updates of our current use indicators to monitor trends and to plan for future strategic opportunities and developments.

Attached is the third quarter summary of the 2022 APL Use Indicators.

Some Use Indicator Definitions:

Circulation

Circulation includes the number of physical items borrowed/checked out from the Library's collections for use outside of the Library during the given period. Items that are used within the Library that have not been checked out and therefore never physically leave the facility are not included in this total. Circulated items that are renewed are included in this statistic.

Circulation also includes the number of digital items streamed or downloaded by active cardholders during the given period. Digital items include eBooks, eAudiobooks, digital magazines and digital media such as music, games and movies.

In-Library Use

In-Library use represents items removed from their usual location for use in the facility. The count includes reference materials, circulating materials, magazines and newspapers.

Holds

Holds is an aggregate of both physical and digital materials. Physical holds represent items not currently available (in-use or on order) or materials the cardholder reserves remotely for staff to retrieve from the shelves as a customer service.

With the facility's closure, physical materials could only be borrowed through the placement of holds by the customer through the library catalogue. Although browsing is now permitted, many customers prefer to get their material through the window pick-up.

Digital holds represent eBooks and eAudiobooks purchased by APL on cloudLibrary that currently are in use. Holds cannot be placed on content not purchased by APL.

Courses

Included in this metric are both registered courses (e.g. Gale online learning and Lynda.com) and courses in database format (e.g. Mango language learning). In September 2019 Lynda.com changed to LinkedIn Learning requiring a LinkedIn account for access. After feedback from public libraries, in March 2021 Lynda.com allowed access to the learning modules without a LinkedIn social media account.

Public Workstation Usage

This metric reflects the number of times a customer logs in during the given period. The amount of time that the public workstation is used is not reflected in this statistic.

Public Workstations were not available from the initial lockdown in March until August; and again not after the second lockdown.

Wireless Internet Usage

This metric reflects the number of times visitors utilized the free wireless network during the given period. The amount of time that the wireless network is used is not reflected in this statistic.

Facebook Reach

APL no longer reports Facebook Reach as the number provided is an estimation based on an unknown FB algorithm.

Online Followers

This metric combines Followers on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram.

Library Programs

A program is a planned presentation, program or event given at a scheduled time in the facility, in the community or virtually.

In April 2020 the category of virtual programs was added to the use indicators. Virtual programs include videos that can be enjoyed at the convenience of the viewer.

Outreach

Outreach includes exhibits/displays and promotional library booth at events, festivals, agencies and schools.

Volunteer Services

Volunteer Services includes the total number of hours provided by high school students and Visiting Library Service (VLS) volunteers.

Volunteer services provided by high school students was enhanced in 2019 to include assistance at Library events; also a change was made to count actual hours rather than people (March 2019). With the advent of the pandemic, volunteer hours were also given for participation in some teen programs.

An estimate of two hours per visit (to include material selection, delivery and interaction between client and volunteer) is allotted to each VLS transaction. Given that most volunteers spend time with their clients, two hours may be under reporting the time the time spent with each client.

When the facility closed due to the pandemic, visits to clients by VLS volunteers declined due to public health recommendations, library closure and lockdowns. VLS visits are increasing since we reopened with several volunteers are relying on staff to select the material or are placing holds – both which allow for window pick-up.

In-Person Visits

Gate counters at the Yonge Street and Parking Lot entrances captured the number of visitors entering the facility.

As we did not have operable gate counters, the Greeter had been taking a manual count since reopening to the public on July 5. On March 14, an automatic People Counter was installed.

Library Membership

Membership is defined as the number of library cardholders who have used the card in the past two years. This metric is taken as a snapshot at the end of the given period. While the Library encourages each member to have a personal library card, families often share one or two cards among them.

After the initial lockdown, APL developed virtual options for customers to acquire a temporary digital library card that could be enhanced for full borrowing privileges through presentation of ID through video conferencing. Library privileges for current members were set to not expire before the end of August to provide ample time for members to renew. This created a temporary spike in membership.

Community Use Statistics

A comparison of metrics indicates an overall annual increase in Circulation of 34.1%.

Circulation of print materials increased 61.6%; audio/visual increased 34.7%; Streaming & Downloads decreased 2.1%.

Streaming and Downloads includes eBooks & eAudio, movies and music. eBooks and eAudio decreased 10.4%; Hoopla increased 5.3%; Freegal decreased 17.1%

In 2021 APL replaced Zinio with PressReader, providing access to 7,000+ newspapers and magazines in 60+ languages that can be translated into 19 languages. Flipster (digital magazines) was added to the offerings and the two products are now reported as eMagazines & eNewspapers with a combined increase of 16.1%

Staff continues to monitor the popularity of individual products to ensure that APL's offerings match customer preferences.

Holds decreased 29.6%. Holds on physical materials decreased 33.7%; Although the facility is now open for browsing, many customers continue to prefer placing holds on their materials for pick-up at the Holds window. Holds on eBooks increased 11.6%. Holds on cloudLibrary (2020) can only be placed on circulating APL materials.

Electronic database sessions increased annually 16.2%, although usage decreased 39% in Q3. January and March enjoyed exceptional usage. This may be explained by staff training, school usage or new products offered. A review of products and reported usage by vendor is currently underway.

Online learning (both registered courses and those accessed through database format) decreased 13.6%. LinkedIn Learning was unavailable for several weeks and may be partially responsible for this decrease.

The Niche Academy was added in February 2021. The Niche Academy is a platform for instructional videos and is counted in electronic services; some of the videos were created by APL staff and are counted as programs that month; they remain available as learning videos that can be watched at the viewer's convenience. Use decreased 29.8%.

Online Followers (Twitter, Facebook & Instagram) increased 17.7% (Twitter increased 4.9%; FB increased 22.7% Instagram increased 21.3%).

eNewsletter subscribers increased 18.2%. There are currently 9,460 subscribers to APL's monthly eNewsletter.

Metrics for Virtual Programs and Attendance present unique challenges. For example:

- While we can measure attendance through registered programs over Zoom, attendance at virtual FB programs is measured by 60 second views.
- Although registrants for films receive a link to the streaming, we do not know how many people view the film together in a household.
- Virtual programs do not allow for targeting of audiences in the same way as in-person program.
- Some counts were reported in different age categories when we reviewed participation activity by demographic.

Highlights in Q3 included a successful *Summer Reading Club*. Staff hosted daily in-library programs, including Saturday Specials, engaged the community in parks throughout town, and hosted a wrap-up party with 132 attendees. Our children's librarian noted:

We had so many positive comments in passing, but the one I remember best is the lady who found us at one of our park programs ... She and her kids came to everything the rest of the summer, and logged reading almost every day. They are new to Canada, so I'm especially happy about that.

APL's *Meet the Candidates* virtual event supported civic engagement with 344 attendees learning about the candidates seeking the office of Mayor and Ward Councilor. *The Baby Café* and *Just 4 You* (Women's Meetup) resumed in-person meetups in Town Park. Award-winning journalist, author and professor, Jan Wong, spoke about her firsthand experiences in Maoist China and during the massacre at Tiananmen Square with a look to the current state of relations with China. *Skilled Trades for Women*, in partnership with ACCES Employment, provided industry-related information, career paths and apprenticeship opportunities.

While it is important to recognize that accurate comparisons cannot be made between live and virtual programming, in Q3 APL delivered 317 programs with attendance of 6,035, through in-library, in-community and online delivery models.

Volunteer Services, largely driven by teen volunteer hours, increased annually 11.1%. Volunteers and clients of the VLS remain hesitant about the safety of delivering material during the pandemic and some have stopped using the service.

Library Membership

Membership (24,890) is down 5.8%. APL began to offer temporary digital library cards and virtual full registration during our closure. In-person registration resumed July 5.

ATTACHMENTS

1. APL Third Quarter Use Indicators 2022

Assisted by Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager, Community Collaboration

*Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer*

DRAFT



Comparatives Quarter Use Indicators

Period: July - September 2022

| | 2022 Quarter | 2021 Quarter | % chg | 2022 YTD | 2021 YTD | % chg |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|--------------|
| Circulation | | | | | | |
| 1. Print | 93,841 | 58,128 | 61.4% | 232,864 | 144,122 | 61.6% |
| 2. Audio/Visual | 11,129 | 8,468 | 31.4% | 29,774 | 22,107 | 34.7% |
| 3. Streaming & Downloads | 33,229 | 34,265 | -3.0% | 107,451 | 109,787 | -2.1% |
| 4. Miscellaneous | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 15 | |
| Total | 138,199 | 100,861 | 37.0% | 370,089 | 276,031 | 34.1% |

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------|--------|--------|---------|--------|---------|---------|
| In-Library Use | 4,827 | 130 | 3613.1% | 9,163 | 130 | 6948.5% |
| Holds | 24,343 | 35,403 | -31.2% | 80,003 | 113,674 | -29.6% |

Electronic Services

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|----------------|----------------|-------------|
| 1. Catalogue Logins | 38,609 | 42,054 | -8.2% | 114,988 | 123,685 | -7.0% |
| 2. Electronic Database Sessions * | 2,721 | 4,459 | -39.0% | 22,977 | 19,772 | 16.2% |
| 3. Courses ** | 320 | 676 | -52.7% | 2,040 | 2,360 | -13.6% |
| 4. Niche Academy *** | 558 | 937 | -40.4% | 2,028 | 2,890 | -29.8% |
| 5. Public Workstation Usage | 2,329 | 504 | 362.1% | 3,886 | 504 | 671.0% |
| 6. Wireless Internet Usage | 6,089 | 3,057 | 99.2% | 13,991 | 6,182 | 126.3% |
| Total | 50,626 | 51,687 | -2.1% | 159,910 | 155,393 | 2.9% |

| | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------|--------|-------|---------|---------|-------|
| Website Visits | 47,335 | 47,843 | -1.1% | 134,050 | 140,241 | -4.4% |
| eNewsletter Subscribers | 9,460 | 8,003 | 18.2% | 9,460 | 8,003 | 18.2% |
| Online Followers **** | 4,715 | 4,005 | 17.7% | 4,715 | 4,005 | 17.7% |

Programs & Events *****

In Library

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|----------|----------------|------------|----------|----------------|
| Youth | 91 | 0 | | 104 | 0 | |
| Adult | 19 | 2 | 850.0% | 19 | 2 | 850.0% |
| All Ages | 1 | | | 1 | 0 | |
| Subtotal | 111 | 2 | 5450.0% | 124 | 2 | 6100.0% |

In the Community

| | | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|---------------|------------|-----------|---------------|
| Youth | 13 | 12 | 8.3% | 33 | 13 | 153.8% |
| Adult | 4 | 0 | | 4 | 0 | |
| All Ages | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | |
| Subtotal | 17 | 12 | 41.7% | 37 | 13 | 184.6% |
| Total Live | 128 | 14 | 814.3% | 161 | 15 | 973.3% |

Virtual

| | | | | | | |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| Youth | 70 | 204 | -65.7% | 410 | 487 | -15.8% |
| Adult | 116 | 154 | -24.7% | 445 | 474 | -6.1% |
| All Ages | 3 | 6 | -50.0% | 10 | 41 | -75.6% |
| Subtotal Virtual | 189 | 364 | -48.1% | 865 | 1,002 | -13.7% |
| Total Programs & Events | 317 | 378 | -16.1% | 1,026 | 1,017 | 0.9% |

Comparatives Quarter Use Indicators

| Period: | 2022 Quarter | 2021 Quarter | % chg | 2022 YTD | 2021 YTD | % chg |
|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|---------|---------------|---------------|---------|
| Attendance ***** | | | | | | |
| In Library | | | | | | |
| Youth | 2,681 | 0 | | 2,797 | 0 | |
| Adult | 149 | 6 | | 149 | 6 | |
| All Ages | 22 | 0 | | 22 | 0 | |
| Subtotal | 2,852 | 6 | | 2,968 | 6 | |
| In the Community | | | | | | |
| Youth | 340 | 282 | 20.6% | 925 | 314 | 194.6% |
| Adult | 65 | 0 | | 65 | 0 | |
| All Ages | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | |
| Subtotal | 405 | 282 | 43.6% | 990 | 314 | 215.3% |
| Total Live | 3,257 | 288 | 1030.9% | 3,958 | 320 | 1136.9% |
| Virtual **** | | | | | | |
| Youth | 1,254 | 3,306 | -62.1% | 6,261 | 7,569 | -17.3% |
| Adult | 1,504 | 2,288 | -34.3% | 6,114 | 8,854 | -30.9% |
| All Ages | 20 | 47 | -57.4% | 66 | 477 | -86.2% |
| Subtotal Virtual | 2,778 | 5,641 | -50.8% | 12,441 | 16,900 | -26.4% |
| Total Attendance | 6,035 | 5,929 | 1.8% | 16,399 | 17,220 | -4.8% |
| Outreach | | | | | | |
| | 0 | 0 | | 0 | 0 | |
| Volunteer Services | 1,233 | 1,198 | 2.9% | 2,472 | 2,226 | 11.1% |
| In-Library Visits | 41,840 | 5,164 | 710.2% | 72,753 | 5,164 | 1308.8% |
| Library Membership | 24,890 | 26,413 | -5.8% | 24,890 | 26,413 | -5.8% |

* Metrics provided by vendors; review of data collection planned for 2023

** LinkedIn Learning unavailable for several weeks

*** Metrics provided by vendor

**** Metrics for programs & events and attendance provided by staff, facilitators and community partners

***** Metrics taken from a combination of views on Facebook, Livestream & YouTube (1 min. views), Google Classroom & Zoom registrations

19-Oct-21



**Aurora Public Library Board
REPORT
SR2022.24**

SUBJECT: Financial Report – for the period ending September 30, 2022

FROM: Bruce Gorman, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: October 19, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

That the Financial Statement for Aurora Public Library for the period ending September 30, 2022 be received as information.

BACKGROUND

The purpose of this report is to present the Aurora Public Library Board with year-to-date expenses and revenues in comparison to the approved annual operating budget. As in previous years, COVID-19 and Town square construction have affected the operations of Aurora Public Library.

These statements are prepared on a modified accrual basis, which differs from year-end audited financial statements that include adjustments for tangible capital asset depreciation in accordance with Public Sector Accounting Board requirements. This method of presentation is consistent with that of the Town of Aurora financial reporting and budget approval processes.

The attached Financial Statement for the period ended September 30, 2022 shows operating expenses at 68% of annual budget. As in previous years, COVID-19 and Town square construction has affected the limited library service operations.

- Salary gapping is at 7.4% of third quarter budget targets
- Other expenses (with the exception of Collections and IT) are underspent
- Provincial operating and pay equity grants will be received later in the year
- Municipal funding is furnished only to the extent necessary to fund operations

ATTACHMENTS

1. Aurora Public Library Financial Statement for the period ending September 30, 2022

Assisted by: Julie Rocca, Business Manager

Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer

**Aurora Public Library
Financial Statement**

| For the period ended September 30, 2022 | Annual Budget | Prior YTD Actuals | YTD Actuals | Balance | Actuals as a % of Budget |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| EXPENSES | | | | | |
| Operating Expenses | | | | | |
| Salaries & Benefits | \$ 3,024,515 | \$ 1,941,015 | \$ 2,045,686 | \$ 978,829 | 67.6% |
| Collections | 378,000 | 264,503 | 289,400 | 88,600 | 76.6% |
| Cataloguing and Processing Services | 34,000 | 25,165 | 30,825 | 3,176 | 90.7% |
| IT Contracts, Equipment & Licenses | 203,000 | 175,354 | 143,835 | 59,165 | 70.9% |
| Programs | 30,000 | 11,022 | 16,242 | 13,758 | 54.1% |
| Public Relations | 26,110 | 9,256 | 13,648 | 12,462 | 52.3% |
| Office Supplies, Equipment & Telephone | 50,000 | 24,643 | 30,271 | 19,729 | 60.5% |
| Staff Development & Board Training | 26,500 | 6,836 | 2,144 | 24,356 | 8.1% |
| Professional Fees | 15,000 | 18,047 | 5,692 | 9,308 | 37.9% |
| Business Plan Initiatives | 10,000 | - | - | 10,000 | 0.0% |
| Unclassified / Contingency | 6,000 | 5,328 | 148 | 5,852 | 2.5% |
| | 3,803,125 | 2,481,169 | 2,577,890 | 1,225,235 | 67.8% |
| Contribution to Capital Reserve | 180,000 | 130,000 | 130,000 | 50,000 | 72.2% |
| TOTAL EXPENSES | 3,983,125 | 2,611,169 | 2,707,890 | 1,275,235 | 68.0% |
| REVENUE | | | | | |
| General Revenue | | | | | |
| Fines | - | - | 1,329 | -1,329 | 0.0% |
| Fees | 2,000 | 1,363 | 5,773 | -3,773 | 288.7% |
| Sales | 1,000 | | 311 | 689 | 31.1% |
| Reserves | - | | - | 0 | 0.0% |
| Interest and Other | 600 | 124 | 971 | -371 | 161.8% |
| | 3,600 | 1,487 | 8,384 | -4,784 | 232.9% |
| Grant Revenue | | | | | |
| Provincial Library Operating Grant | 44,140 | | - | 44,140 | 0.0% |
| Pay Equity Grant | 1,285 | | - | 1,285 | 0.0% |
| | 45,425 | - | - | 45,425 | 0.0% |
| Total General and Grant Revenue | 49,025 | 1,487 | 8,384 | 40,641 | 17.1% |
| Municipal Requisition | 3,934,100 | 2,609,682 | 2,699,506 | 1,234,594 | 68.6% |
| | | | 2,659,506 | | |
| TOTAL REVENUE | \$ 3,983,125 | \$ 2,611,169 | \$ 2,707,890 | 1,275,235 | 68.0% |



Aurora Public Library Board

REPORT SR2022.25

SUBJECT: Library Service Hours Report

FROM: Bruce Gorman, C.E.O.

DATE: October 19, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve the following change to Library service hours as follows:

1. Closed December 24 and December 31, 2022

BACKGROUND

On March 17, 2020, Aurora Public Library complied with the provincial decree to close to the public to help stop the spread of COVID-19. One of the conditions of reopening in May 2020 was reduced public operating hours. There were also significant changes in how library services could be provided to the public. Aurora Public Library staff worked successfully to adapt to first virtual and now hybrid programming and have continually revised processes to ensure materials circulate safely.

This deliberate and considered approach prioritizes staff and public safety and recognizes the decreased number of in person customers using the library at this time compared to pre-pandemic levels.

Like many businesses and services, Aurora Public Library operational hours have recently returned to pre-COVID service levels, with the exception of Sunday afternoons from September to May.

The Aurora Public Library Collective Agreement for CUPE Local 905.02 employees includes Article 21.01 (a), specifying that unionized employees shall not work past 12 p.m. on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

With December 24th and 31st being Saturdays this year, and with the Library providing full service hours on December 23rd, December 27th, and January 2nd, closing on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve would convey to Library staff an appreciation and an acknowledgement of their dedication to Aurora Public Library and this community from the Board.

Assisted by: Maida Rae, HR Coordinator/EA

Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer



Aurora Public Library Board

REPORT SR2022.26

SUBJECT: 2023 LIBRARY BOARD MEETING SCHEDULE

FROM: Bruce Gorman, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: October 19, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

That the *2023 Library Board Meeting Schedule* be approved.

BACKGROUND

Traditionally Library Board meetings are scheduled the 3rd Wednesday of each month. In 2020, the provincial government passed legislation that reduced the number of library board meetings required per year. After consultation with the Board at the February 2020 meeting, this report implements the recommended eight (8) Aurora Public Library Board meetings for 2022.

Past practice also proposes a date change for the December Board meeting. The Board may wish to consider meeting the second week of December to avoid potential conflicts with members' seasonal commitments.

| Schedule Date | Date Change | Time |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------|
| Wednesday, February 15, 2023 | | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, April 19, 2023 | | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, May 17, 2023 | | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, June 21, 2023 | | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, September 20, 2023 | | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, October 18, 2023 | | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, November 15, 2023 | | 7:00 p.m. |
| Wednesday, December 20, 2023 | Wednesday, December 13, 2023 | 7:00 p.m. |

Assisted by: Maida Rae, Human Resources Coordinator/Executive Assistant

Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer



Aurora Public Library Board

**REPORT
SR2022.27**

SUBJECT: Electronic Monitoring Policy Report

FROM: Bruce Gorman, C.E.O.

DATE: October 19, 2022

RECOMMENDATION

That the Library Board approve the Aurora Public Library Electronic Monitoring Policy dated October 19, 2022.

BACKGROUND

The provincial government has introduced legislation requiring employers with more than 25 employees to implement an Electronic Monitoring Policy effective October 2022. A written copy of the policy will be emailed out to all Library staff according to the legislative requirements.

APL has reviewed the legislation and draft policies from an HR advisory service, as well as comparator libraries in developing this new policy for review. This policy is in compliance with the Employment Standards Act, 2000.

CONCLUSION

As an employer, Aurora Public Library prioritizes transparency with employees and compliance with provincial legislation. The Electronic Monitoring Policy will ensure the Library has clear definitions and communicates clearly regarding the electronic monitoring of library employees.

***Assisted by: Maida Rae, HR Coordinator/EA
Executive Leadership Team Review completed October 2022***

*Bruce Gorman
Chief Executive Officer*



AURORA PUBLIC LIBRARY

ELECTRONIC MONITORING POLICY

Aurora Public Library (APL) values trust, discretion, and transparency. This policy discloses and informs on electronic monitoring activities.

APL collects information through electronic monitoring for a variety of reasons, including protecting its legal and business interests.

APL does not employ any mechanisms designed or intended for the electronic monitoring of its staff. Regular activities such as the use of key fobs for access, video surveillance for security (under the control of the Town of Aurora) , computer network access and e-mail are all part of APL's daily business undertaking.

Some information collected by electronic monitoring may be considered personal information. When personal information is under APL's control it will remain protected.

If any personal information is collected, its use and disclosure will be limited to its stated purpose. Any information collected by electronic monitoring may be used during employee reviews or during consideration of disciplinary decisions.

APL will adhere to all privacy and confidentiality legislation that applies to the collection, use, and disclosure of personal information obtained by electronic monitoring.

Definitions

Electronic monitoring: Using technological, electronic, or digital means to track, observe, or monitor someone's actions.

Personal information: Any factual or subjective information about an identifiable individual.

Acknowledgement and Agreement

I, _____ acknowledge that I have read and understand the Electronic Monitoring Policy of Aurora Public Library.

I agree to adhere to this policy. I understand that if I violate the rules set forth by this policy, I may face disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Related Policies

1. Internet Access Service Policy
2. Video Surveillance Policy
3. Disconnecting from Work Policy
4. Circulation and Fees Policy

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----------|
| Approved Date: October 19, 2022 | Motion #: |
| Effective Date: October 1, 2022 | |

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Thanks from the Aurora Food Pantry

Back-to-school is a reminder that summer is winding down and that includes the great summer events put on by the Town of Aurora to help us all enjoy the weather and the sense of community.

At the Aurora Food Pantry, those same summer events are celebrated for people offering food donations to help during the challenging summer months.

On behalf of the Board, the staff, the many volunteers and our clients, we would like to thank those of you who included the Pantry in your summer fun with your donations.

You helped make a difference in the lives of the more vulnerable members of our community.

Allison J. Stuart, Chair
Aurora Food Pantry


Enough with the barking: reader

Today, I developed an urge to write a letter to the editor concerning dogs in Aurora that bark incessantly.

I would like to start by saying that I think the owners of these dogs are inconsiderate and selfish neighbors.

This is the end of my letter – I feel better now!

Stewart Ivola
Aurora



THE POWER OF MUSIC

PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

In "Swimming Back to Trout River" music and its riveting power connects the characters through space and time. Capture the power of music and performance in this year's OBOA photography contest.

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

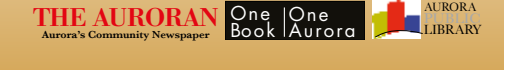
There are two categories: youth (ages 14 - 17), and adult (ages 18+). Images may be digitally altered. Photographs must be high resolution for print.

Winning photographs will be published in The Auroran. Winners will be announced at the OBOA Grand Finale on Saturday, October 22. APL employees/Board/judges and their immediate families are ineligible to win.

Please send submissions to brock@lpcmedia.ca
Contest Deadline: Friday, September 30, 2022

PRIZES

Winner: \$100 gift card
Runner-Up: \$50 gift card



THE AURORAN

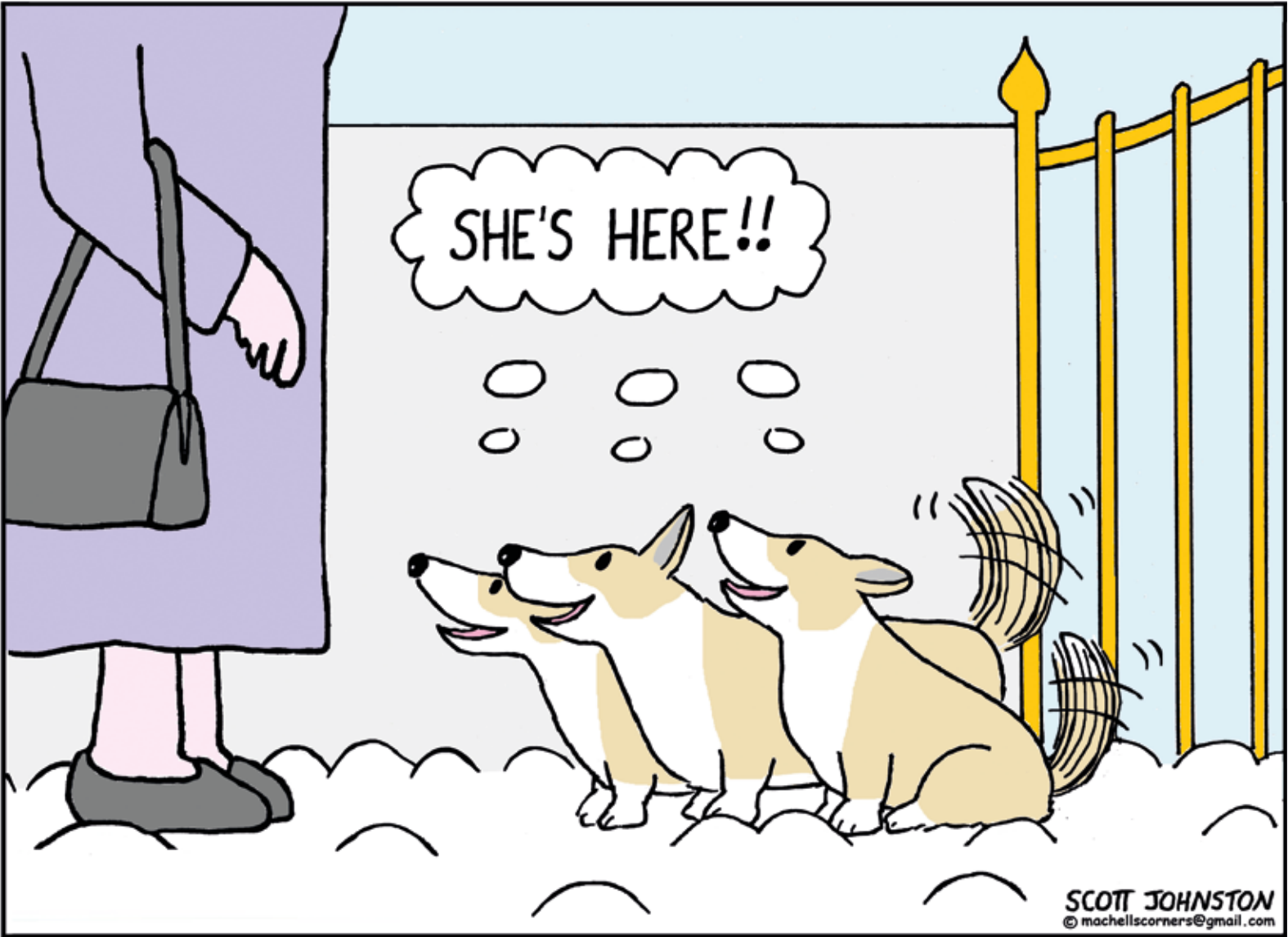
www.TheAuroran.com



@TheAuroranNews

To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to brock@lpcmedia.ca
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

Machell's Corners



Sunset on the second Elizabethan Age

Memories are funny things. Depending on how old you are, time can play tricks on you. You might remember things a little differently from how they happened. The added perspective that years bring might shed a different light on things. The importance of such memories, in turn, might ebb over time as well.

Some memories, however, are very different. They can be indelibly etched in your brain no matter the circumstance.

And so it was on June 29, 1997 when my mother and I left Newmarket early in the morning bound for Toronto. A bouquet of flowers purchased the night before were held precariously in my lap, teetering in a jug of water to keep them as fresh as possible until they were needed.

The sun had barely come until full force when we found our place outside St. James' Cathedral, intent on seeing The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh start their day before carrying out a series of engagements in Toronto.

As an eleven-year-old with a budding interest in the monarchy, this was a chance not to be missed. In addition to hoping the peach-coloured flowers would catch Her Majesty's eye as she went into the church, I was also wearing a tie-died Tasmanian Devil t-shirt for a little extra pop from the crowd. It's a sartorial choice that makes me cringe today, but it seemed like a good idea at the time.

The excitement in the air was palpable when the Royal Couple arrived at the church around 11 a.m. The Queen was the first to emerge from the car, with Prince Philip following just a few steps behind. After greeting members of the clergy, they made their way towards the entrance of the cathedral, smiling at the hundreds who were waiting to catch a glimpse.

Unaware of the proper protocols, I reached out as far as I could over the crowd barrier to give the bouquet to our Head of State. She glanced over in my direction and made what I felt was eye contact, before turning back to the path and entering the church.

My chance had passed. It was the first time I felt truly deflated.

But the feeling was only temporary. Moments later, a member of Her Majesty's entourage came back out of the church, made a bee-line for me and said in hushed tones that the Queen had asked him to come out to assure me she had seen me and promised she would come my way after the service after meeting members of the choir. I guess the deflation showed on my face.

That deflated feeling evaporated



BROCK'S BANTER

Brock Weir

instantly and was replaced with a nearly unbearable excitement.

The Queen emerged once again about an hour later to the toll of bells. The entourage-member was standing beside the monarch as he gestured with his arm for she and Prince Philip to walk through the line of choristers and then conduct a walkabout.

Without saying a word, I could see The Queen frown ever so slightly and firmly shake her head. The walkabout was to begin immediately and she walked directly over to my side of the barricades.

The excitement was too much by the time she got to me and I have no recollection of any exchange we might have had – but the feeling was unforgettable, and I think it's a testament to her character that she made the time to make one little kid in the crowd feel just a little bit special that day.

Over the subsequent years, I was fortunate enough to meet The Queen on three more occasions, each time unique and special, but that very first time stands above the others. And the memories made me smile over the past week as we prepared to see the curtain fall on the second Elizabethan Age and a woman who had, over her 70-year reign, become an inextricable part of our everyday lives.

The week that was seems almost surreal.

On Tuesday, September 6, the Queen received her latest British Prime Minister, Liz Truss. Slight and leaning on a cane, Her Majesty's frailty was clear, as was her dedication to the job – one to which she pledged her unstinting devotion five years before her accession in 1952.

The next day, she issued what was to be her last public statement – this time to Canadians upon the tragic stabbings this month in Saskatchewan.

"I would like to extend my condolences to those who have lost loved ones in the attacks that occurred this past weekend in Saskatchewan," she said. "My thoughts and prayers are with those recovering from injuries, and grieving such horrific losses. I mourn with all Canadians at this tragic

time."

Little more than 24 hours later, Canadians were mourning with King Charles III as well, and with the loved ones she left behind.

Committing her "whole life, whether it be long or short" to our service in 1947 was a promise she made in a different age, a world which no longer really exists. It could have been mere lip service. It could have been a vow we would have forgiven her for hanging up in her nineties, for handing things over to a different generation.

But it was a vow made to us and it was a vow she kept literally until the very end.

As we look towards a post-Elizabethan world in Canada and across the Commonwealth, I think we can all be heartened by the legacy she has left us, as well as the timely reminder of what true service and dedication to something larger than ourselves actually means.

In contrast to many leaders, Elizabeth II never struck me as a public servant who was in it for herself or her own personal glory.

Many of her closest friends and acquaintances underscored the point that she much rather would have spent her life quietly on a farm with her beloved horses and dogs, far away from the pomp and circumstance that defined her life. But fate had other plans.

After unexpectedly becoming Heiress Apparent to the throne at the age of 10 upon the abdication of her uncle, Edward VIII, her life was no longer really her own. She had a destiny to fulfil and that destiny was a role she felt duty bound to take anything but lightly.

She was conscious of her role as monarch, yes, and took the role extremely seriously, but there was also the facet that she was, above and beyond being Queen, a custodian of the Crown and a representation of something much larger: a public servant like no other.

How well she served us – and how grateful we are, and should be, for that service.

As tiny as the Queen was in physical stature, King Charles III has exceptionally large shoes to fill. But the lives, legacies and lessons from his exceptional parents will serve him well during his reign – and, in my view, the new monarch's reign is already off to a promising start.

"I speak to you today with feelings of profound sorrow," the King said in his first public broadcast as Monarch on Friday. "Her Majesty the Queen – my beloved mother – was an inspiration and

Continued on page 17

THE AURORAN
Aurora's Community Newspaper

The Auroran Newspaper Company Ltd.
15213 Yonge Street, Suite 8, Aurora, L4G 1L8

Main number 905-727-3300
Fax number 905-727-2620

Founder: Ron Wallace | Publisher Emeritus: Rosemary Schumaker

Subscriptions available within Canada and U.S.
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Publisher is not liable for slight changes or typographical errors that do not lessen the value of an advertisement. Disputes must be brought to the attention of the publisher prior to the following edition.

To submit a letter to the editor, please send your email to brock@lpcmedia.ca
Deadline for submissions is Sunday at 1 p.m.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 16

Elvis tribute artists Garry Wesley and Elvis Priestly (Dorian Baxter) will perform this today at the Aurora branch of the Royal Canadian Legion (105 Industrial Parkway North) in matinee and evening shows. A seniors matinee will be performed 1.30 – 3 p.m. for \$15, and again in the evening at 7 p.m., for \$25 per person. Tickets are available at the Legion or by calling 905-751-9872 or 289-221-2687.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

The Aurora Farmers' Market continues its 20th season at Town Park today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Come out to Town Park today for an array of farm producers, artisans and food vendors.

The Aurora Historical Society hosts its third annual Victorian Harvest Tea today – two seatings: 12 noon and 2.30 p.m. Tickets are \$31.50

per person and can be purchased at aurahs.com/victorian-harvest-tea-2022. Break out your fascinators, it's Tea Time! Treat yourself to a delicious autumn-themed afternoon tea at the 3rd Annual Victorian Harvest Tea on the beautiful tree-lined grounds at Hillary House National Historic Site. In addition to your pot of tea, sandwiches, scones, and desserts, enjoy a free tour of Hillary House to learn about the unique history of this beautiful National Historic Site in Aurora. Please note, this event will take place outside (weather permitting) on uneven ground. If you have accessibility requirements, please call to inquire.

THINGS You Ought To Know

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

The Aurora Seniors' Centre will host a "super colossal" sale today from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Trunk sale, book sale, craft sale. The Aurora Seniors' Centre is located at 90 John West Way. For more information, call 905-726-4767.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24

The Aurora Farmers' Market continues its 20th season at Town Park today from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Come out to Town Park today for an array of farm producers, artisans and food vendors.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

The Aurora Historical Society's Speaker Series continues tonight from 7 – 9 p.m. with a virtual and in-person talk by Antony Anderson on the subject of "Lester Pearson and the Suez Crisis." Tickets are \$8.50 for AHS members and \$10.50 general admission. Lester Pearson, Canada's foreign minister (and future prime minister) stands before the United Nations General Assembly. His speech, shaped by caution and hope, is a last-ditch attempt to prevent a conflict in Egypt from igniting a conflagration throughout the Middle East. He is about to carve out a razor's edge of common ground to bring together angry allies and bitter enemies by suggesting the creation of the first UN peacekeeping force. Pearson's diplomacy throughout the Suez Crisis launched a bold experiment in international security and cemented Canada's reputation as "a moderate, mediatory, middle power." In this presentation, Antony Anderson will paint a compelling portrait of a future prime minister, but also present a nuanced analysis of the political maze navigated by Pearson to avert a bloody war. To register and for more information, visit aurahs.com/antony-anderson-lester-pearson-and-suez-crisis.

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The Aurora Historical Society (AHS) presents The 2022 Hillary House Black & White Ball tonight at the Royal Venetian Mansion. Tickets are \$150 for AHS members and \$168 general admission. For more, visit aurahs.com/hillary-house-ball-2022-black-white-0. The Aurora Historical Society's signature gala fundraising event returns! The Hillary House Black & White Ball 2022 supports one of Aurora's most significant historic landmarks. This exciting gala event will feature an elegant evening of fine dining, live music with the After Hours Big Band, dancing, a stunning silent auction, and some fun twists, too. Be

part of what is sure to be the most-talked about event of the year, while contributing to the preservation and restoration of Hillary House National Historic Site.

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 26

Garden Aurora welcomes Dugald Cameron as he talks about Spectacular Spring Bulbs. Join us at 8:00 p.m. at the Royal Canadian Legion, 105 Industrial Parkway North for tips and tricks, a fabulous speaker and the opportunity to join the Aurora Garden Club. More info at www.gardenaurora.ca or 905-713-6660. Please note that during the Year of the Garden, guests can attend at no charge.

CONTINUING

JULY 25 – SEPTEMBER 17

The Aurora Cultural Centre presents Backwards and Forwards: Reflections in Porcupine Quills, a solo exhibition by Vanessa Dion Fletcher. Recent quillworks (2020-present), ranging from intimate pieces on paper to large mural installations, at the core is a negotiation between the artist's hands and porcupine quills. Vanessa Dion Fletcher is a Lenape and Potawatomi neurodiverse Artist. Her family is from Eelūnaapēewii Lahkēewiit (displaced from Lenapehoking) and European settlers.

Partagez le Français: Ce groupe accueille les ADULTES / 18+ (des francophones aux débutants capables de converser) - qui cherchent à mettre en pratique leurs compétences Conversationnelle en français. Over Zoom with a nominal fee of \$2.50. RSVP by visiting meetup.com/Partagez-le-francais. For more information, email partagez.york@outlook.com.

Support AbuseHurts' Delivering Hope Full Circle Program textile recycling and donation program. In the current COVID climate, a greater number of people are wanting to donate or get rid of unwanted items, increasing the need for more outlets being available to receive the items. This program will provide a convenient way for people to donate or get rid of used/unwanted clothing, blankets, linens and furniture and will help lessen the amount of items ending up in landfills. Materials that were previously perceived as waste will now be seen as a valuable resource further encouraging redistribution. The items will be recycled in the following ways: To be given to individuals who are survivors of violence and are transitioning from shelters into new homes; To be sold in our store; To be sold to a textile recycler, which makes for an ongoing source of funding for Abuse Hurts enabling them to provide their services to the thousands of people that require them each year. When and Where: Monday and Wednesday, every week, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m., with 30-minute time slots – only 1 drop off per time slot. If you do not have an appointment, we cannot accept your donation. The Abuse Hurts Warehouse is located at 1208 Gorham St, Unit 4, Newmarket - rear unloading dock. Visit AbuseHurts.ca to select your drop off time slot.

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Aurora Votes 2022

All-candidates meetings begin this weekend at Aurora Public Library

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The race is on to be Aurora’s next Mayor and Council and, if you haven’t had a knock on your door from a Mayoral or Council candidate, you will soon get a chance to meet them face-to-face – or virtually.

The first virtual option to hear what the persons looking for vote are hoping to bring to the Council table will take place this Sunday, September 25, with a Meet the Candidates event

hosted by the Aurora Public Library over Zoom.

Set to take place between 2 and 4 p.m., all registered candidates for Mayor and Council have been invited to participate.

“Meet the candidates registered to run for the offices of Mayor and Council in the municipality of Aurora,” say Library organizers. “Candidates will each open with a short introduction. A selection of questions submitted in advance will then be posed to each mayoralty candidate. If you have a

question to submit, please email it to rmandelcorn@aurorapl.ca.”

To register your free spot at the event, visit bit.ly/39UXMA0.

The Aurora Chamber of Commerce will host an in-person election event the following week, on October 4 from 8 – 10 a.m.

“Each Councillor candidate will have an opportunity to provide an overview of their platform,” says the Chamber. “Following that, the Mayoral candidates will have an opportunity to present their platform, followed by a business-related Q&A

for the Mayoral candidates.”

Registration for this free event is open now.

For more information, visit aurorachamber.on.ca.

Full coverage of the events will be found in the subsequent edition of The Auroran.



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AURORA

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aurora.ca/truthandreconciliation #NDTR

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Parks & Recreation Master Plan will guide facility development

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

As local sports groups get a feel of the two new ball diamonds on the Hallmark Lands near Industrial Parkway South, the Town is revising its blueprint for future sports development.

The new diamonds were identified as a need within the Town's current Parks & Recreation Master Plan, but new features in the sports and recreation field could be dictated by a revised plan currently in development.

"We're a changing community and, therefore, there are changing needs," says Al Downey, Aurora's Director of Operations. "[Changing needs are] the reason you do a review every five years."

In the weeks and months ahead, the Town aims to hold "stakeholder interviews" and public information sessions to get a snapshot of current needs and future wants ahead of the draft plan being presented to the incoming Council in the first quarter of 2023.

"That will help us – as well as Council – identify service levels where we may have some gaps, where we met some of our targets, but I think that is going to set the framework for any future [facilities] and what those future facilities might look like. Part of the work that the consultant was doing is we always look at best tips for particular parks. We only have a finite amount of land, so some of the discussions around this is repurposing and that is always part of the discussion...and will be reviewed as well. There are some facilities that we may be looking at modifying or repurposing in order to maximize recreational use."

"We are very open to discussions with regards to maybe some of the things that we don't have or we would like some attention to, whether those are sports fields or whether those are facilities. We're looking at gym expansion. There's always a request at some point for a curling rink or a cricket pitch and some of those things we don't presently provide. Whether we have those opportunities or not, some of the existing groups, whether they be football, rugby, soccer, or baseball, whoever, often come in and say, 'This is a great what we have right now, but we might need some additional things.'

"We are also trying to tie that into sports tourism. There is definitely a push to try and provide some sports tourism activity within the Town, so when we look at facilities we look at it through a lens of what other opportunities could these facilities provide [to users] outside of Aurora?"



PHOTOGRAPHY CONTEST

SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

In "Swimming Back to Trout River" music and its riveting power connects the characters through space and time. Capture the power of music and performance in this year's OBOA photography contest.

There are two categories: youth (ages 14 - 17), and adult (ages 18+) Images may be digitally altered. Photographs must be high resolution for print.

Winning photographs will be published in The Auroran. Winners will be announced at the OBOA Grand Finale on Saturday, October 22. APL employees/Board/judges and their immediate families are ineligible to win.

Please send submissions to brock@lpcmedia.ca
Contest Deadline: Friday, September 30, 2022

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Aurora's Community Newspaper

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THE AURORED

Aurora's Community Newspaper

Vol. 23 No. 50 905-727-3300 **TheAuroran.com** **FREE** Week of September 29, 2022 **CMCA AUDITED**

ALL THAT GLITTERS – The Aurora Chamber of Commerce honoured the best of local business last Wednesday evening at their annual Business Excellence Awards. Here, the evening's honourees pose for a group picture. For more on this year's gala, see pages 6 and 7.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Mayoral contenders square off in first all-candidates meeting of campaign

Affordable housing, homelessness top of mind

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Affordable housing and homelessness were top-of-mind issues for the three candidates vying to be Aurora's next Mayor at the first all-candidates meeting

of the 2022 municipal election campaign. Hosted by the Aurora Public Library over Zoom, the virtual meeting was a chance for residents to hear from just about every candidate in the running to be on Council in Wards 1 – 6, but also the Town's three mayoral candidates: Phiona Durrant, Anna Lozyk Romeo, and incumbent Tom Mrakas.

Following a chance for each candidate for Mayor and Council to introduce themselves through opening remarks, a Question & Answer session featuring

queries submitted by local residents were posed to Durrant, Lozyk Romeo and Mrakas by Reccia Mandelcorn, the Library's Manager of Community Collaboration.

First up was, "What will each of you do to help homelessness in our community?" "Ultimately it's a problem and I think a lot of people don't realize that we do have homelessness within the Town of Aurora," said Mrakas, the first candidate invited to respond. "We have been working with

Continued on page 20

Friday's day for National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to be marked across Aurora

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

September 30 marks the second annual National Day for Truth & Reconciliation and a full afternoon and evening of activities are planned to take place in Aurora to mark this poignant occasion.

Honouring the lost children and survivors of residential schools, their families, and their communities, when

Continued on page 21

CULTURAL CELEBRATION – Dancers from around the world came together for spectacular displays at Town Park on Saturday for Aurora's annual Multicultural Festival, which this year acted as the launch for Culture Days. For more, see Page 15.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Mayoral contenders square off in first all-candidates meeting of campaign

From page 1
York Region at providing an [emergency] men’s shelter and developing it within the Town. That work is continuing. We’re going to look at a proper location....so we can provide housing and ensure that all residents of our community don’t end up homeless within the Town of Aurora, and not only Aurora, but all of York Region. That work is continuing, we’re going to push forward with that, and we’re going to look at ways we can increase attainable housing and affordable housing within our community.”

Durrant, responding next, said homelessness looks like all of us.
“When we’re talking about building a shelter, we’re forgetting that homelessness doesn’t mean we’re going to just make this building and push people there... and that’s the solution,” she said. “We have a community where we ignore the fact that homelessness means people are leaving and sleeping on the couch next

door. They can’t afford their rent. Just last year, I had to help a family who had been evicted from their apartment; a single mom with four kids, so homelessness is not a fairy tale. It’s happening here. It goes beyond the checking of the boxes.... I want to make sure my voice reaches Regional Council [to] advocate in the Region and work with elected Councillors to make real action.”

Responding last, Lozyk Romeo agreed that homelessness is a serious issue that is being exacerbated by rising prices.
“We also have to work with the Region and also the other municipalities [to see] what they’re doing to help,” she said. “We have to work collaboratively. One of the things we have in Aurora right now is we have a transition place we’re building on Yonge Street...so we’re doing something. Homelessness in Aurora is visible. There are people in the bus stops we see every day and what are we going to do about it? As a municipality, we need to work with

our staff to ensure we have local shelter providers and work with the Region and other levels of government.”

Key in ending homelessness is having a place for people to live, and the next question looked at the other piece of the puzzle: “What steps will you take to ensure good affordable housing for low- and middle-income individuals and families?”

Lozyk Romeo, the last to respond to the first question, was the first to tackle this issue and said it’s a “loaded question.”

“I have been watching what’s actually been coming to Aurora and...we don’t have anything that came in terms of planning applications, there’s nothing that’s affordable,” she said. “The houses start at \$1 million and I really think we have done nothing when it comes to the affordability. I think in this next term we need to focus on the next applications coming in to see if we can do something with the developers and we can work with them, and even looking at different land opportunities to see if we can place, develop and meet affordable housing; but in Aurora it’s difficult, just the way we introduce the housing to Aurora. We moved to Aurora because it was much cheaper, but now I can move back to where I lived because it is much cheaper.”

Mrakas countered the assertion that “nothing” had been done, citing the work carried out collaboratively between Aurora and other municipalities.

“Through our OP, we’re developing policies that look at providing a diverse housing stock in areas of our Town,” he said. “This is a question that doesn’t just lie in Aurora, it lies across all municipalities in York Region and, quite frankly, in the GTHA. We have been working with the Small Urban Mayors of the GTHA and we have been working collaboratively on these issues working with the Premier, working with all levels of government because it’s not going to just take us and our policies, we need all levels of government to work together to make sure that the housing in our municipality is developed in a way that is attainable

and affordable not only for our younger generations to be able to stay within our municipality, but also for our seniors to be able to age in place.

“This is very important and we’re working through that through our OP and making sure we implement what is important in our community but ultimately too we need to work with the Province to make sure they make reforms to the Tribunal so that when we make decisions they’re the decisions that are right for our community to make sure we have that housing. I will also add that we have approved a full building over at Leslie and Wellington where we’ve partnered with Housing York and is going to provide 300 units below market rate, which is going to be very affordable for every resident in this community to come and take advantage of. We’re looking forward to that development occurring.”

Last up was Durrant, who said changes need to be made.

“There are 83 per cent of people that [have] said, ‘When they start to build a family, they want a home, not an apartment,’” she said. “We have a plan, a Town plan that, yes I want to adhere to as mayor when elected, but when there are great ideas that come in, we want to make sure that changes are made accordingly. Do you understand that we can have buildings where they can afford not just because of that; the Region in February of 2021 I think stated a Town should give two acres every five years for [affordability] and all other communities have responded with an action plan towards that. Please ask Tom what have we done and what’s our answer for that?”

Further opportunities need to be explored with Habitat for Humanity, she added, and ensuring that the “missing middle” is prioritized over large in-fill housing developments.

“There’s a lot we can do,” she said. “We just need a leader like me who cares.”

NEXT WEEK: Environmental issues and development.

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Tigers earn three points in Cobourg, for the OJHL Showcase

By Robert Belardi

The OJHL Showcase saw many NCAA scouts make their way to Cobourg, ON, to see all of the best talent in the OJHL last week.

Teams put on a show throughout the week and many players had the pleasure of speaking with these scouts for the chance to be offered the opportunity of a lifetime.

For the Aurora Tigers, it was a spectacular week for head coach Greg Johnston and his group.

The Tigers lost a tough 5-4 defeat against the Oakville Blades in overtime and went on to thrash the Brantford 99ers 10-1 for all eyes to see.

Yet, between the results, head coach Greg Johnston and his coaching staff were proud to see some of their players spoken to by scouts from overseas. Their development means more than anything else.

"Their development, quite frankly, in my opinion, is our biggest job. Winning is part of it, sure. We're playing Jr. A hockey, you go in there to win. The development of all the players to get them to the next level is primary," Johnston said.

“Look at Tyson Doucette. Comes to us right after Christmas (last season), he’s a heck of a hockey player. He was

with us for a short period of time. He had lots of coaching before we got a hold of him, that's for sure, and he was a good hockey player before we got a hold of him; but, we helped him make that next step into the OHL. It doesn't make my team any better when I lose a player like Tyson Doucette. But his success, creates opportunities for the next time in line. It does, quite frankly, make me feel good and the coaching staff feel good, that we helped these guys, whether it be major or a little bit to get to the next level."

Reflecting on the past week, Johnston said the game against the Blades was the one that got away.

The Tigers gave up a 3-0 lead and a let go of a 4-1 lead in this matchup.

Johnston likes where this team is at. He said there are a lot of things that the group is working on – including team chemistry – which is still being built with players working with each other on their respective lines.

Coming up this week the Tigers will see their first triple-header of the season.

The boys take on the 99ers again this Friday night at 7.30 p.m. at the ACC, before heading out on the road to take on the Georgetown Raiders Saturday night and the Lindsay Muskies Sunday afternoon.

York United keep playoff hopes alive with emphatic 3-0 win against Valour FC

By Robert Belardi

York United overturned an early 1-0 deficit with three unanswered goals to keep the club's playoff hopes alive with two games remaining in the Canadian Premier League campaign.

Valour FC defender Stefan Cabara stepped up to the spot and converted a 16-minute penalty to give Valour FC the lead, however York United turned the game on its head.

At the 34-minute mark, Molham Babouli rifled home his fifth goal in his seventh Canadian Premier League appearance this season to tie up the match.

In the second half, Chrisnovic N'Sa put on a display to everyone in attendance to why his weaker left-boot is equally as magical as his right. N'Sa dribbled the ball towards the top right-corner of the 18-yard box, before finessing the ball to the opposite corner of the net with his left foot, in what was an incredible moment of magic to give York United the much-deserved lead.

And almost 20 minutes later, Australian-born forward, Luis Lawrie-Lattanzio scored his second goal of the

year thanks to a beautiful through-ball by Babouli to ultimately seal the victory.

Statistically, United were the better team throughout the entirety of the match.

Holding 52 per cent possession in the process, this was York United's fifth consecutive match the club has attempted 10 or more shots towards goal. As of late, it has been an effective approach by head coach Martin Nash and his men, who have been rewarded for firing on all cylinders.

This was also York United's second consecutive game the club conceded less than 10 fouls. A nice little streak to have, heading into two tough matches to cap off the CPL season.

Now just three points behind Valour FC and Pacific FC - who are both tied on 37 points, but Valour FC holds the final spot – United needs to travel west this Saturday to take on Forge FC at Tim Hortons Field. The last time these two clubs battled it out, United defeated Forge 3-1 on August 20.

If the club earns a victory, it will set up a dramatic final day in the CPL season, when York United take on first-place Atlético Ottawa on the road next Sunday, October 9.



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Mayoral candidates share environmental concerns at APL meeting

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

The 2022 municipal race has afforded voters different visions for Aurora during the 2022-2026 term of Council and beyond – but one area in which the three people vying to be Mayor can agree on is the environment is well worth further protections.

Candidates Phiona Durrant, Tom Mrakas and Anna Lozyk Romeo expressed their views last month at an all-candidates meeting hosted by the Aurora Public Library.

Featuring input from just about every person vying for a seat at the Council table on October 24, moderator

Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager of Community Collaboration at the Library, posed several questions to the mayoral candidates that had been submitted by members of the public.

These concerns ranged from the affordability crisis to environmental protections.

“Do you think Aurora’s Official Plan goes far enough to protect the natural environment?” Ms. Mandelcorn asked of the upcoming Plan, which will serve as a blueprint for Aurora’s growth and development through 2051. “What changes to environmental policies have you seen, or would you like to see in the new draft Official Plan?”

Responding first was Durrant, who referenced the Climate Emergency

declared by the outgoing Council as well as work that has been carried out at Town Hall through the Community Energy Plan.

“Things are already in place and we now just have to look at them and see if they’re working, reassess them if they need to be done, and bring action forward that’s going to be helping because I have seen, according to studies from the University of Toronto, that climate change is affecting our seniors and I see [a report from the CBC] that almost 100 [seniors] homes...don’t have air conditioning in their room,” said Durrant. “It’s a big issue to address [and] I would look at what’s there, work with elected Council, and make the change that is needed.”

Next to address the issue was Lozyk Romeo who underscored the urgency for doing more.

“No matter what our Official Plan is right now...our greenspaces are shrinking,” she said. “That’s the thing – greenspaces are not enough; I think we need to preserve the natural environment and we need to protect, we need to strengthen the parameters. I believe that we need to protect our habitats of species at risk. One last thing, maybe outside the Official Plan, but I think decision-makers should follow through [on] those plans and the decision-makers come together.”

Last to tackle this question was incumbent Mrakas who said Council has done “many things” to strengthen environmental protection, including the development of green development standards across Aurora.

“We’re one of the few municipalities that have that green standard within any development and any application that comes forward,” he said. “We want to make sure that any development that comes forward makes sure that it follows our protections from a green standard perspective and it continues to protect our environment. Beyond that, our Official Plan talks about tree canopies and when you do look at our tree canopy, not only is it one of the best in York Region, we continue to improve and grow our tree canopy. We’re at 34 per cent [and] the recommended range for tree canopy from York Region is 29 per cent to 35 per cent. We’re at 34 per cent already and we’re continually growing that.

“Our green spaces are continuously growing...we have one of the best trail systems in all of York Region if not the GTHA and we continue to make them even better. From a green perspective, we’re going to continue to work hard to make sure our environment is protected, our Oak Ridges Moraine is protected, and we continue to protect the greenbelt. I voted against any of those changes at the Regional level at Council, in their Official Plan, and I will continue to fight to ensure we protect our environment not only [within] our

borders but across York Region.” The next question on the environment looped back to development, with Ms. Mandelcorn asking the candidates to “address concerns on the influence of developers with respect to the removal of trees and the impact on existing ecosystems.”

Tackling the question first was Mrakas who said it was “not a great question.”

“Personally, I don’t think there’s any influence from developers,” he said. “They can come forward and request whatever they like through any application process, but ultimately my decision process lies with what’s best for our community, for the residents of our community, and...I respect and hope that every member at the Council table respects that and does the exact same thing.”

Durrant tackled the question next and said developers do influence the process but “that decision can be positive or negative based on who is in leadership.”

“What I’m looking forward to do, when elected, is to bring all developers into one room and have that conversation where communities can meet and talk with them,” she said. “I also want to include incentives to promote green buildings when they’re building, that they will feel rewarded because developers are those owners and they’re looking for benefits like any other business. When we create incentives, rebates and negotiate so they don’t have to go off to the tribunal and do things we are no longer in control with, they are influential. [I] want to make sure that whatever I am agreeing with... is in the best interest of our communities, not for my pocket, not for my comfort, but community voices are brought to the table.

“We have seen that inflexible strategy from leaders that make a knowledge[able] voice feel like they are the problem but we want the community to come in, speak to the builders, and get to know them, because I know builders can make a difference and we know that they are the solution when we work together as a team, and that’s what I’m looking forward to doing.”

Rounding out the discussion was Lozyk Romeo who said, “Developers are doing what they’re supposed to do.”

“They’re going to come in and they’re going to want to develop,” she said. “If they want to remove the trees, they will remove the trees, but it is up to us and our policies to uphold them and make sure we don’t remove the mature trees. I am not a tree-hugger, but mature trees are better for the environment, but we also have to make sure that...is not enough. We can’t give in to them what they want.”

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Aurora Museum & Archives is feeling... *Freshly Scholastic!*

Many of us drive or walk past it every day, a bastion of education and growth that has seen so many Aurorans inside its halls. It can be hard to think of such a familiar and ordinary building as being new and exciting, but in 1972, it appeared as a modern marvel on the landscape. Aurora High School turns 50 this year, and we thought it might be nice to share a classic image (2002.19.631) of the site shortly before construction finished. School’s in!

The start of October signifies a new season, marking the transition from long summer days into brisk fall sunsets. We witness many changes during this time, in the vibrant fall foliage and the cooler temperature in the air.

Summer has come to an end, but the memories we have will always remind us of what we made the most of. After all, it’s not about how much time we have, it’s about what we do with it.

Much like the change in season, the change that happens in our lives will not always be expected or welcome. But by learning to embrace discomfort, we can open the door to new possibilities and new beginnings.

On National Truth and Reconciliation Day, I joined the Town of Aurora in unveiling the land acknowledgment plaque at the Aurora Town Hall. Together, we honoured the lost lives of children and survivors of residential schools, commemorating the tragic and painful history of our past. The path to reconciliation starts with recognizing the ongoing impact of residential schools and bringing attention to the Indigenous peoples’ land in which we live and work.

Another Thanksgiving is around the corner, and we will be gathering with



Parsa’s Perspective

Michael Parsa, MPP
Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill

our loved ones to celebrate the feast of harvest. I hope that as we count our blessings, we remember the resilience and bravery of those who came before us. Those who fought to preserve our safety and freedom to ensure democracy in this country. I hope we can remember the generosity of our neighbors because we all collectively play a role in building a better future for the next generation.

No matter where we come from or what we look like, as long as we stand up for each other in times of need, nothing can take away the unity in which our strength lies. On this season of gratitude, I’m thankful that I get to see the best of this community everyday – from the kindness of individuals who

volunteer at food banks and shelters, to those who participate in fundraisers and community events to raise awareness for those in need.

That’s the generosity I witness in people who call this community home.

And right now, as our community knows, the people of Iran are demanding change.

People around the world are protesting the regime’s brutality against women and men. Even in this moment, brave Iranian people are on the streets, risking everything to fight for freedom and peace.

Amidst the period of heartache, we have also experienced a newfound moment of solidarity.

It is estimated that 50,000 people showed up for the freedom march held in Richmond Hill on October 1. It was a moment of historic magnitude in this community which showcased our vast support and amplified the voice of protestors fighting in Iran.

As always, my office and I are here to serve the constituents of Aurora-Oak Ridges-Richmond Hill. We are ready and at your service if you require assistance with any provincial matters. The best way to connect with us is through contacting my office at 905-773-6250 or emailing us through michael.parsa@pc.ola.org.

Transparency in local political campaign ads

Those loyal readers may recall the column I wrote a few weeks back regarding coverage of local elections.

In the column I noted that the editor/publisher of this paper and I have a good relationship.

Brock Weir has never told me or ever suggested to me that I write about a particular topic.

I also agree with the editorial policy of this newspaper, which is “that the Auroran will not select a slate nor recommend who should be the mayor of the community.”

I also like the fact that a lot of editorial space is reserved for reader feedback; this is one of the key reasons for the success of the newspaper. I have changed my mind on some issues as a result of various letters to the editor.

This newspaper, probably fifteen years ago, had a unique policy with respect letters to the editor. This paper would - on occasion – print a letter while withholding the identity of the letter writer.

Ron Wallace, the editor at the time told me:

“My usual rule applies: You need to sign your letters. I must be able to print those signatures, and whatever you say, won’t put me in jail for libel.

In other words, I may not print your letter, but I will tell you why before I make that decision. So, I need to know how to contact



FRONT PORCH PERSPECTIVE

Stephen Somerville

you. Submissions will NOT (his emphasis) be accepted from declared candidates.”

I do believe there might be a democratic gap that should it rear its ugly head, ought to be closed regarding political advertising in this newspaper.

It could stem from outside, anonymous interest groups sponsoring “Open Letters” to the community.

This writer has absolutely no problem with anyone communicating a particular viewpoint on a subject.

This newspaper has a policy of not publishing anonymous letters to the editor. And with good reason, if you are going to offer some criticism, then people should know who you are.

In this hypothetical case, a group or persons behind this “Open Letter” could produce a document

as an “Advertisement” that cleverly gets around this issue.

I know that Brock is not asking for my input/thoughts on this matter, but I will offer them up anyway.

I know that the publisher needs to make a dollar and turning down advertising dollars – especially in this economy – is not easy. But the policy of this newspaper should be that it does not accept political ads unless there is a contact person published with the ad.

Simply providing an e-mail address or phone number at the bottom of the advertisement does not cut it.

I look forward to watching, and commenting on, an interesting Mayoralty and Council races this year.

The citizens of Aurora deserve a vigorous and respectful debate this fall on the issues of growth, the level, quality and costs of services, and the appropriate level of taxation.

Removing the shroud of secrecy around policy advertising will ensure that there is a fair, and transparent atmosphere in which to have an engaging and thoughtful discussion of Aurora’s future.

Stephen can be contacted at
stephengsomerville@yahoo.com



Welcome to Library Land

By Reccia Mandelcorn

The theme for First Nations Public Library Week 2022 (October 3 – 7) is “Bekaa, Bzindaachagan”, which translates to “Wait and Listen”. From Anishinaabemowin, the language of the Ojibwe people, the act of *waiting* and *listening* to what someone has to say is a form of respect and offers listeners the opportunity to learn new perspectives.

Having hosted three “Meet the Candidates” events in a little over a year, I have been doing a lot of listening to what candidates bring to the table. What I find interesting is that, although I do not always agree with everyone’s views, and although my role must remain politically neutral, I continue to be surprised to see collegiality across party lines and through very differing perspectives.

Perhaps this is because the role of the public library in a local political context is to support their communities through civic engagement, rather than to provide a forum for political debate. In a recent article in the Toronto Star, Vickery Bowles (city librarian at Toronto Public Library) speaks of the importance of access to unbiased information to help people make informed decisions. Over the years, I have heard some criticism of why there is no debate permitted in a library-led “Meet the Candidates” event. Personally, I love a healthy (even raging) debate, but not within the context of the role of the public library in supporting electoral discourse. I’ll leave that to other organizations where the debate format is better suited to their place in our community.

The public library as a political institution empowers residents access to information and offers opportunities to consider the possibilities and perspectives that elections and democracy offer. I believe we should always take a balanced and respectful position in how we deliver the message. When I consider the meaning of Bekaa, Bzindaachagan | Wait and Listen, I think this can be a reminder for us to enrich our lives by listening to others imparting their knowledge, perspectives, and history.

If you missed our “Meet the Candidates” event, you can view the positions of the candidates for mayor and ward councillor at bit.ly/3fk4nGs. I invite you to “Wait and Listen”, do your own research – and to please remember to exercise your democratic right to vote.

What I’ve been reading:

The Bone Code by Kathy Reichs

Red Paint: The Ancestral Autobiography of a Coast Salish Punk
by Sasha LaPointe

Bob Dylan, My Rabbi (chapbook)
by Honey Novick

Still Hopeful: Lessons From a Lifetime of Activism
by Maude Barlow

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.

THIS WEEK’S POLL

Have you already decided
your vote ahead of this
month’s municipal election?

Yes No Unsure

www.theauroran.com

Previous Poll Results

Will King Charles III make a good monarch?

| RESULTS TO DATE | YES | NO | UNSURE |
|--------------------|-----|-----|--------|
| | 43% | 53% | 7% |



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FALL FESTIVITIES

Lucas, Abby, Ava, Emma and Phoenix got into the festive spirit for fall at Aurora's Colours of Fall Concert, a kick-off to the Thanksgiving weekend featuring pumpkin carving, a corn roast, and more – all accompanied by the sounds of a tribute to Great Big Sea. For more on the concert at Town Park, see Page 20.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

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Mayoral candidates focus on local business at election meeting

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Aurora's mayoral candidates continue to share the visions they have for the community ahead of the October 24 municipal election.

Last week offered Phiona Durrant, Anna Lozyk Romeo, and incumbent Tom Mrakas two opportunities to share their views with potential voters; first at an all-candidates meeting hosted by the Aurora Chamber of Commerce

on October 4, and again the following evening at a meeting for Ward 1 candidates hosted by the Town Park Area Ratepayers Association.

At the Chamber meeting, which was held virtually over Zoom at 8.30 a.m., the three mayoral candidates shared their business credentials with the business community and fielded questions from Chamber president Sandra Ferri.

One of the areas of focus was how Aurora businesses fared during the first two years of the global pandemic and

what further supports are needed to ensure they thrive into the future.

"We've heard that although businesses survived the pandemic through three very difficult years, the more difficult role will be in the next few years through the recovery period," said Ms. Ferri. "What do you think are the greatest barriers for local businesses and what will you do to provide support to businesses through your term of office?"

First to answer their question was

Continued on page 8

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SPOOKY SPECTACULAR – As the fall leaves fluttered down on shoppers at Saturday's Aurora Farmers' Market, Beth, Michelle and Kara helped spread the word for the 3rd annual Neighbourhood Spectacular Haunted House contest, set to take place around the Town Park area. For more, visit townparkhaunt.ca.

Auroran photo by Glenn Rodger

Chinese dancing and author's talk to round out 2022 One Book One Aurora program

BY BROCK WEIR
EDITOR
LOCAL JOURNALISM
INITIATIVE REPORTER

Over the course of 2022, book lovers across Aurora have been enjoying Swimming Back to Trout River, the debut novel of Linda Rui Feng.

The story follows five-year-old Junie in the wake of China's Cultural Revolution.

Taking readers from the present, to the past, and back again, the evocative story

Continued on page 6

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Chinese dancing and author’s talk to round out 2022 One Book One Aurora program

From page 1

has sparked a community-wide dialogue, with events ranging from An Evening with Jan Wong, live performances in the Library’s Living Room space, writing and photography contests, writing workshops and more.

Now, the program is set to culminate this month with further cultural performances and a virtual event with the author herself.

“The Cultural Revolution is the backdrop to the novel and the fall programming [at the end of September] was An Evening with Jan Wong, an award-winning journalist and bestselling author speaking about her experiences in China and her work as a foreign correspondent with China in the late 80s and early 90s,” says Reccia Mandelcorn, Manager of Community Collaboration for the Aurora Public Library, who also spearheads the One Book One Aurora (OBOA) campaign.



The York Chamber Ensemble performed the Butterfly Lovers Concerto at the Aurora Public Library earlier this month as part of the One Book One Aurora program. **Photo by Lucy Frechette**

“It was fascinating to hear what it was like to witness the 1989 massacre at Tiananmen Square. She was watching from the balcony and to hear her perspective on current political relations, including the detention of the two Michaels...the audience was very well-informed and they asked fabulous questions that really sparked an amazing conversation.”

Partnerships have been “essential” to the OBOA campaign, she said, and one such key partnership was with the York Chamber Ensemble, which performed earlier this month at the Library with the orchestra and soloist Joyce Lai taking on the Butterfly Lovers Concerto.

“Our living room was packed and the audience was absolutely transformed by the magic of the performance,” says Ms. Mandelcorn. “What I loved was seeing all the children, many of whom were enjoying their first experience of classical music. There was one little boy who was underneath the staircase dancing. Who would expect somebody would be dancing to a classical performance?”

When you invite a community to go down a common literary path, perhaps the unexpected is the only thing that can be expected as each reader will have different takeaways from what is on the page.

“Going Back to Trout River offered rich

opportunities for programming with its themes of politics, immigration, family and music,” says Ms. Mandelcorn, adding that programming will continue this Saturday, October 15, with The Art of Chinese Dance, performed by The Mellow Sisters & Tian Shu Art Group, a non-profit art group that supports Chinese culture and promotes multiculturalism, with this set of artists sharing cultural experience through both dance and vocals.

The 2022 One Book One Aurora campaign will conclude next Saturday, October 22, with a virtual question and answer session with Rui Feng over Zoom. The talk is set to begin at 2 p.m.

“Guests will meet the author and get a fascinating glimpse into the events that shaped this powerful book,” says Ms. Mandelcorn. “Come online and meet Linda. She’s fascinating, she’s an academic, storyteller, novelist, and to talk about the book... I know that many people are anxious to meet her because they loved this book, but I think this will be an experience for people who haven’t read the book, because they will leave with something positive.”

And, in the end, that’s what it is all about: leaving a positive legacy and always keeping an eye on what books might continue to unite the community

through the written word.

“The OBOA project is supported by the Library but it is owned by the community and every year we invite book clubs to sign on to receive copies of the book to discuss at their meetings and what was really exciting this year is the number of book clubs has grown from a couple when we first started to nine this year, and each has between five and 25 members. This is not including the casual book clubs but registered book clubs that are reading. That was very exciting.

“This year’s selection, Going Back to Trout River, it offered rich opportunities for programming with its themes of politics, immigration, family, music. If anyone has a great title in mind for next year’s selection, I hope [the community] will contact me at rmandelcorn@aurorapl.ca. Authors have to be in commuting distance to Aurora. We hope that we will be back to an in-person format next year. The book needs to have themes we can draw upon to enlarge the reading experience through programming and contests. I’m looking for ideas.”

For more information on this weekend’s performances, to register for next Saturday’s book talk, or take part in ongoing virtual programming, visit onebookoneaurora.com.

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