Annapolis Valley Regional Library

Extra Board Meeting
Monday, July 13, 2026
6:00 p.m. – 8:00p.m.
Wolfville Council Chambers

Agenda

1. Call to order
2. Approval of Agenda
3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting
   3.1 Minutes of the June 18, 2026 Meeting
4. Guests/Presentations: none
5. New Business
   5.1 Report to Board: Extension of Service
6. Next meetings:
   Thursday, September 17th, 2026, In-person, 5:30pm
   Thursday, November 19th, 2026, In-person, 5:30pm
7. Adjournment

Annapolis Valley Regional Library
Regular Board Meeting
Thursday, June 18, 2026
6:30 pm – 7:30 pm
In Person
Minutes (DRAFT)

PRESENT: Janet Ness, Jill Cox, Emily Lutz, Karie-Ann Parsons-Saltzman, Adele MacDonald, Chrystal Remme, Samantha Hamilton, Ty Walsh

STAFF: Julia Merritt (CEO), Carin Cress (EA), Jai Soloy, Beth Kawecki

GUESTS: None

1. Call to order

   J. Ness called the meeting to order at 6:42 pm.

2. Approval of Agenda

   Additions to the Agenda:

   5.1.7 June 17/26 Middleton FOL Letter to AVRL

   11.2 June 18/26 Chronicle Herald

   MOTION: **To approve the agenda as presented, with the additions of Items 5.1.7 and 11.2.**

   MOVED BY: **Ty Walsh** **SECONDED BY:** **Karie-Ann Parsons-Saltzman**

   CARRIED

3. Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting

   3.1 Minutes of the May 25, 2026 Meeting.

   MOTION: **To approve the minutes of May 25, 2026 in person meeting.**

   MOVED BY: **Adele MacDonald** **SECONDED BY:** **Karie-Ann Parsons-Saltzman**

   CARRIED

4. Guests/Presentations:

   None

5. Correspondence and Communications
   5.1 Received:
      5.1.1 June 02/26 Hearn to Minister Lohr
      5.1.2 June 03/26 CORL to Minister Ritcey
      5.1.3 June 03/26 Minister Ritcey to J. Ness
      5.1.4 June 08/26 NSFM to AVRL
      5.1.5 June 08/26 Padovani to Minister Ritcey
      5.1.6 June 10/26 Twohig to Minister Ritcey
      5.1.7 June 17/26 Middleton FOL Letter to AVRL

MOTION: To receive correspondence and communications for information.
MOVED BY: Jill Cox SECONDED BY: Ty Walsh
CARRIED

   5.2 Sent:
      5.2.1 May 28/26 AVRL to CCTH

MOTION: To receive sent correspondence.
MOVED BY: Chrystal Remme SECONDED BY: Karie-Ann Parsons-Saltzman
CARRIED

6. Business Arising from the Previous Meeting:
   Covered in other items in the Agenda

7. Committee Reports
   7.1 Executive Committee - report to be added to the package
   7.2 Human Resources Committee - none
   7.3 Finance Committee
      7.3.1 Financial Updates: none since May 25th meeting
      7.3.2 Income Statement: In progress based on budget adjustments
      7.3.3 Deferred Revenue report: In progress based on budget adjustments
      7.3.4 Investment report: none
      7.3.5 Investment Subcommittee report: none

MOTION: To accept the committee reports as presented.
MOVED BY: Ty Walsh SECONDED BY: Karie-Ann Parsons-Saltzman
CARRIED

8. Report from the Chief Executive Officer
   8.1 Update from the CEO: all updates contained in other reports

8.2 Statistical Reports: update not available due to closure

MOTION: **To accept the Report from the CEO as presented.**
MOVED BY: **Karie-Ann Parsons-Saltzman** **SECONDED BY:** **Ty Walsh**
CARRIED

9. New Business
   None

10. Announcements from Board Members
    A. MacDonald suggested that the FAQs be posted on social media as a "29 Questions in 29 Days" campaign, with one question and its corresponding answer shared each day.

    J. Cox expressed concern that she might need to step down from the Board due to the closure of her branch. A. MacDonald referred to the Libraries Act and advised that she may remain on the Board as a representative.

    T. Walsh expressed appreciation to the public and community members for the support they have shown to the Library Board and its libraries.

11. Nova Scotia Libraries News and Updates
    11.1 June 11/26 The Pictou Advocate
    11.2 June 18/26 Chronicle Herald

12. Next meetings:
    Thursday, September 17th, 2026, In-person, 5:30pm
    Thursday, November 19th, 2026, In-person, 5:30pm

13. In camera: labour relations and contract updates

MOTION: **To move in camera, 7:09 pm.**
MOVED BY: **Ty Walsh** **SECONDED BY:** **Adele MacDonald**
CARRIED

MOTION: **To move out of camera, 8:47 pm.**
MOVED BY: **Ty Walsh** **SECONDED BY:** **Adele MacDonald**
CARRIED

14. Adjournment

MOTION: To adjourn the meeting at 8:48 pm.
MOVED BY: Chrystal Remme
CARRIED

Report

To: AVRL Board

From: Julia Merritt, CEO

Date: July 13, 2026

Re: Extension of Service 2026-27

This report is presented for decision.

The Issue

There is interest in understanding what capacity the AVRL Board has for extending service at the five library branches currently scheduled to close on Sunday, July 19th, 2026.

This report explores the factors associated with this possibility.

Financial Summary

AVRL has $160,000 available in unrestricted funds.

The cost of extending service for a period of up to 14 weeks would leave AVRL with no funds for unexpected costs or emergencies.

The costs of pausing the planned restructuring and continuing operations at all 11 branches until March 31, 2027, would range from $355,336.26 to $537,631.35. These costs would be entirely for the employment costs related to service at the five libraries scheduled for closure.

All eight funding municipalities agreed to increase their 2026-27 contribution to some extent. However, two municipalities stipulated conditions that could not be met. The use of the funds from the other six municipalities are already accounted for in the '26/27 budget.

If the AVRL Board were to ask for applicable municipal units to increase their contributions to the full 50%, without conditions, the total additional request would be $217,970.

Depending on the operational model chosen, if:

a) AVRL continued operations at all 11 branches until March 31, 2027;
b) The AVRL Board uses all of the $160,000 available to it; and
c) All municipalities agreed to increase their 2026-27 contribution by 50%; then

AVRL would finish the 2026-27 fiscal year with a final position ranging from a surplus of $18,093 to a deficit of ($185,254).

Operational Considerations

There are two primary operational considerations at play in this situation. It is important to note them as they may impact the rollout/success of any decisions made by the Board. As a result, the AVRL Board could not guarantee a seamless, uninterrupted library service at the five branches.

1) Staffing

Due to the realities of the staffing situation, it is likely that there will be a gap in service coverage after July 19th.

As part of its restructuring, AVRL reconfigured the staffing complement at the remaining six branches. Not all staff were laid off, however the restructuring impacted staff in three different ways:

a) **Bumping**

In compliance with union processes, the unionized staff then engaged in an internal bumping process.

b) **Vacant Positions**

As per the collective agreement, after bumping, the remaining vacant positions were then posted for and filled. These positions will take effect on Tuesday, July 21, 2026. A substantial number of employees were placed in these positions.

c) **Voluntary Severance & Resignation**

A number of unionized staff chose to accept severance through a voluntary retirement program, or made the decision to accept severance after being laid off. Staff who have accepted severance will conclude their employment with AVRL by Saturday, July 18th.

Several staff have also secured other employment since the announcement of the Provincial budget in February, and left shortly before or after the restructuring process.

At the conclusion of these three processes, there are six employees who will remain on layoff without a permanent position. This means that there is minimal capacity for AVRL to use existing employees to extend service at these locations.

Further: whatever work becomes available would be temporary, which impacts how the AVRL proceeds with deploying the unionized staff.

Unionized staff would not be recalled to temporary positions. The work of staffing the five locations would be classified as “extra work”, which would be offered to employees on layoff, part-time employees who want extra hours, or casual staff. For extra work that extends past ninety (90) days, this work would be reclassified as a “temporary position” which would require a temporary contract.

As outlined below, under the 2025-26 service model, the AVRL would need to have 9.9 FTE of employee time available to open all five branches at 2025-26 levels (11 full and part-time positions, plus casual coverage for vacations and sick time).

AVRL will face challenges recruiting enough staff from the union and the pool of casual employees which may result in delays or disruptions in any effort to extend services.

2) Municipal and Provincial Agreements

There are two Towns and three Villages affected by the scheduled branch closures. The Board would need to confirm with each municipal unit that it is willing to extend service on an interim basis for a portion of, or the remainder of, 2026-27.

AVRL would also have to confirm the status of any additional municipal contributions as soon as possible. Below is the chart outlining the original request to municipal units and the funds that will be contributed for 2026-27, as well as the updated amount that would need to be requested to achieve the full 50% increase across all funding partners.

Municipality	Amount Requested	Amount Granted	% of Request	Conditions or Limitations	Updated Request Amount
Annapolis County	$65,350	$16,991	26%	• No conditions • 2026-27 only	**$48,359**
Annapolis Royal	$1,700	$1,700	100%	• No conditions • 2026-27 only	**n/a**
Berwick	$6,500	$4,350	67%	• No conditions • Not stated if 1-year	**$2,150**
County of Kings	$165,800	$82,900	50%	• Conditions implied but not stated • 2026-27 only	**$82,900**
Kentville	$21,400	$21,400	100%	• No conditions	**n/a**
Middleton	$6,150	$1,600	26%	• Only granted if Province contribues • 2026-27 only.	**$6,150**
West Hants	$67,200	$67,200	100%	• Conditional on retaining service levels in WHRM • 2026-27 only	**$67,200**
Wolfville	$15,150	$3,939	26%	• No conditions • 2026-27 only	**$11,211**
Totals	**$351,450**	**$200,080**	**57%**		**$217,970**

The July 8th meeting between CCTH and AVRL went well. However, at a July 9th press conference Minister Ritcey definitively stated there would be no additional financial contribution from the province. The Minister did say that CCTH wants to continue discussions about a more sustainable model for library services.

Potential Scenarios

The following three scenarios of operations and costs have been prepared for the Board to consider extending service. The extension could range from 9 to 14 weeks, with potential operations to March 31, 2027 if the municipal and provincial funding partners contribute the remaining outstanding funds. Each scenario uses the entire remaining unrestricted funds - leaving nothing for unexpected costs or emergencies. All scenarios require substantial additional funding be secured if they were to continue to the end of the 26/27 fiscal year.

A) 2026-27 Service Model

The below is a chart of the costs associated with operating the five branches for eight months under the restructured service model for 2026-27. **Based on the $160,830 available to the Board, service could be extended for nine (9) weeks. Shortfall for October 2026 - March 2027: $403,223.52**

Branch	FTE (permanent plus casual)	Cost Aug 1, 2026 - Mar 31, 2027
Hantsport	2.8	$107,526.27
Kentville	2.8	$107,526.27
Lawrencetown	2.8	$107,526.27
Middleton	2.8	$107,526.27
Port Williams	2.8	$107,526.27
Totals	**14 FTE**	**$537,631.35**
Cost per month		**$67,203.92**

B) 2025-26 Service Model

The below is a chart of the costs associated with operating the five branches for eight months under the 2025-26 service model. **Based on the $160,830 available to the Board, service could be extended for twelve (12) weeks. Shortfall for November 2026 - March 2027: $250,496.**

Branch	FTE (permanent plus casual)	Cost Aug 1 2026 - Mar 31, 2027
Hantsport	1.0	$45,261.50
Kentville	4.0	$155,726.13
Lawrencetown	1.0	$45,261.50
Middleton	2.7	$104,783.36

Port Williams	1.2	$49,760.72
Totals	**9.9 FTE**	**$400,793.61**
Cost per month		**$50,099.20**

C) Combination of 2025-26 and 2026-27 Staffing Model

The below is a chart of the costs associated with operating the five branches for eight months at two different levels of service: the three branches in the Villages would operate under the 2025-26 service model, and the two branches in the Towns would operate under the 2026-27 restructured staffing and hours. **Based on the $160,830 available to the Board, service could be extended for fourteen (14) weeks. Shortfall for mid-November 2026 - March 2027: $199,877.**

Branch	**FTE (permanent plus casual)**	**Cost Aug 1, 2026 - Mar 31, 2027**
Hantsport	1.0	$45,261.50
Kentville	2.8	$107,526.27
Lawrencetown	1.0	$45,261.50
Middleton	2.8	$107,526.27
Port Williams	1.2	$49,760.72
Totals	**8.8 FTE**	**$355,336.26**
Cost per month		**$44,417.03**

Risks

1. $160,000 represents only 6% of the AVRL's annual funding formula (2020-2025). By drawing down this amount in its entirety, the Board will not have any capacity to withstand any future variances in expenses.
2. There is no guarantee that interim staffing could be arranged on such short notice; disruption after July 20th is almost inevitable. Library operations may not be reliable at these five branches.
3. Without sustainable funding, the AVRL Board will still need to prepare to close these branches by mid-October. There may be restructuring costs that will need to be incurred a second time to restart the restructuring process.

Benefits

1. Additional time will be available to confirm municipal and provincial funding decisions.
2. Additional work will be available to library staff who want it.

Decision Items

1. Does the Board wish to use its remaining unrestricted, unallocated funds for this purpose?
    a. If so, to what extent is it willing to extend library service at the five branches scheduled for closure?
        i. Which Operational Model will it use?
        ii. What is the length of time the Board will extend operations?

2. Will the Board make a request to the funding partner municipalities for an additional $200,000 - $400,000 for the remainder of the fiscal year?
    a. Given that the AVRL Board will only receive approximately $137,000 of the requested $351,000 from funding municipal partners, the Board could request an additional $214,000 to make up this difference. It would be feasible to operate Option C for the remainder of the fiscal year, if all municipalities contribute the full amount.