



BOARD LEGACY DOCUMENT

BACKGROUND

This legacy document summarizes the activities and achievements of the Lincoln Pelham Public Library (LPPL) Board during its 2023 - 2027 term. It highlights key achievements, identifies challenges and opportunities for the next Board, and supports continuity during the Board transition. It also helps prospective candidates understand the scope of service on the Library Board.

Andrew Colgoni (left) in conversation with Perdita Felicien during the Books on the Bench Author Series, May 2023.

 LINCOLN PELHAM
PUBLIC LIBRARY

2023 - 2026 LIBRARY BOARD

Donna Burton (Chair)
Nicole Nolan (Vice-Chair)
Councillor Mike Mikolic
(Lincoln)
Councillor Shellee Niznik
(Pelham)
Andrew Colgoni
Ruth Gretsinger
Joanna Kocsis (former)
Linda Roote
Terry Teather
Jayme Toms
Lathie Vannabouathong
Stephanie Xamin

The Board of Directors was appointed following the official merger of the public libraries of the Towns of Lincoln and Pelham on April 1, 2022.

The Board has been responsible for governing during the period of the initial transition of financial systems, IT and technical services as well as policy development.

The Board's work was guided by the LPPL Strategic Plan 2023 - 2027, developed in 2022. "Building Connections" became the mission for the new Board as the merged library system took shape after the pandemic. The phrase reflected both the goal of connecting the communities of Lincoln and Pelham through library service and the need for capital improvements at two branches requiring significant renovation.

MISSION

Lincoln Pelham Public Library builds connections. We actively create opportunities for groups and individuals to come together to learn, collaborate, and inspire each other.

VISION

LPPL enriches lives with inclusivity, inspiration, responsiveness, and resilience.

INCLUSIVE

Providing equitable service that underpins a sense of belonging and freedom of expression

INSPIRING

Fostering literacies, creativity, and innovation

RESILIENT

Supporting the community and library staff in a rapidly changing world and strengthening capacity through shared services, collaboration, and fund development.

RESPONSIVE

Listening to the community and providing enhanced facilities and evidence-based services.

Board members Ruth Gretsinger, Mike Mikolic, and Stephanie Xamin collaborate during a visioning exercise as part of the strategic planning process.



BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

2023

Enhanced network security

To better protect staff and customer data.

Updates to Technology system-wide

Added ePrintIt software - remote printing for customer convenience

New integrated phones, upgrade to Windows 11, new OPACS and circ hardware

New Book Lending Machine

Installed at the Meridian Community Centre, the Lending Machine annually provides circulation of over 1,000 books for all ages. Purchased with Ontario Trillium Foundation grant funding secured by the Town of Pelham.

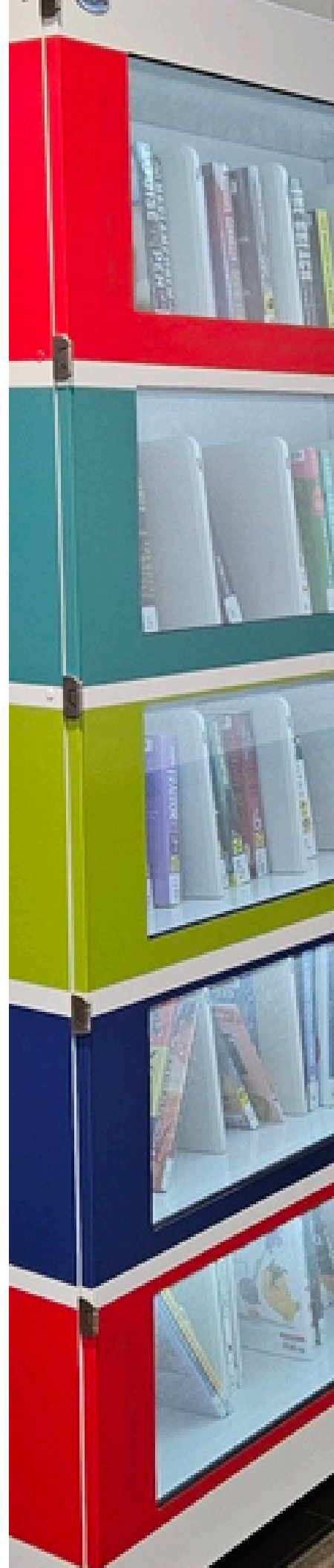
2024

Baby's First Book program launches

In partnership with West Lincoln and Grimsby Public Libraries, the Baby's First Book program provides a board book with literacy information for every baby born at West Lincoln Memorial Hospital. The same package is available to families in Pelham at the Fonthill and Maple Acre Branches.

Memory Lab

A donation from the Rittenhouse Trust enabled the creation of the Memory Lab in Vineland. Specialized equipment enables the scanning, editing and printing of photographs and digital conversion of a variety of media.



Migrant Farmworkers Hub

Working with community organizations, the Maple Acre Branch provides space for migrant workers to access health and legal services and enjoy activities.

English as a Second Language Programming

In April 2024, LPPL partnered with a group of ESL teachers to start a weekly English Conversation Circle in Beamsville. Interest and participation continue to grow, and a new ESL collection was added in 2025, funded by the Niagara Community Foundation.

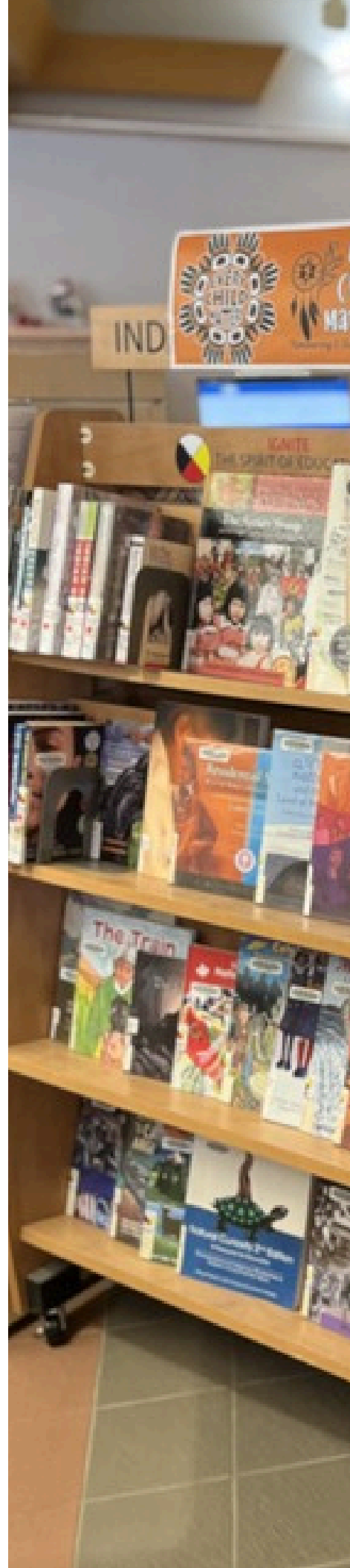
Established Teen Advisory Groups (TAGS)

In both Lincoln and Pelham, TAGS were created to get youth input on collections, programs, and services. The new Teen Services Associate works in all four branches to engage youth.

2025

Accreditation

With a review of over 190 elements,, including administrative and operational policies, Lincoln Pelham Public Library, as a merged system, achieved accreditation for the first time. A complete overhaul of LPPL policies was required, and the Board spent many hours reviewing and editing. In January 2025, LPPL's Technical Services team received the OLITA Technology Advancing Libraries Award for its work in merging catalogues from two separate libraries into one system for LPPL. This provides customers with better access to collections across four branches and improves efficiency for purchasing and offering a wider selection of materials.





**The Lincoln
launch of the new
Bookmobile at the
Fleming Centre ,
May 2025.**

Bookmobile Launch

In spring 2025, the Bookmobile hit the road, bringing library services to all corners of Lincoln and Pelham. Outfitted with more than 3,000 loanable items, the Bookmobile follows a regular two-week schedule and visits schools, senior residences, and community events. By the end of 2025, the Bookmobile had welcomed aboard 4,122 visitors and loaned 2,072 items. The Bookmobile was funded by the Towns of Lincoln and Pelham, Niagara Community Foundation (David S. Howes), Desjardins, and GivingTuesday donors.

GICB Grant Announced

The Next Chapter: Vineland Branch received notice of a \$2 million grant from the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Fund.

Capital Campaign Launch

The Next Chapter: Fonthill Branch launched its public capital campaign to raise funds to support the work of Phase Two of the planned renovation. Fonthill's Coyne Family made a leadership gift, and the branch will be renamed in their honour.



**Library Board Chair
Donna Burton at the
launch of The Next
Chapter campaign
in Vineland,
April 2026.**

2026

Capital Campaign Launch

The Next Chapter: Vineland Branch launched its public capital campaign to raise funds to support the work of the planned renovation.

Website Update

The LPPL website underwent strategic improvements and refurbishment to enable it to function more efficiently for customers and staff.

CEO Review Process Update

To provide an updated framework for CEO evaluation going forward, the Personnel Committee of the Board attended training and workshops and developed a new policy and framework for CEO review.

Board Recruitment

Branches will host Board recruitment information sessions and provide information to interest community members.

BOARD-SELF ANALYSIS

OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE NEXT TERM

In early 2026, the LPPL Board completed evaluation questionnaires to assess its effectiveness over the term and identify areas for improvement.

The Board led the transition to LPPL following the merger of two library systems and oversaw several major accomplishments, including accreditation, the launch of bookmobile service, two renovation projects, and two capital campaigns.

While survey results were generally strong, responses indicated opportunities to strengthen the Board's advocacy role and visibility with Councils and the community. The updated CEO review policy and procedure also provide a clear framework for future Boards in managing the Board-CEO relationship.

Overall, the survey reflects a committed and effective Board that worked constructively with the CEO, Councils, and the community to advance the library's development.



Ruth Gretsinger, Terry Teather, and Linda Roote weave threads as part of the Hope and Healing community weaving.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We recommend the incoming Board focus on these priority actions:

- Develop and approve a strategic plan for 2028 - 2031 with clear priorities, measures, and timelines.
- Maintain strong policy and governance support for intellectual freedom across all branches and services.
- Strengthen Board advocacy with Councils and increase the Board's visibility in the community through regular attendance at library programs and events and Council meetings.
- Support a staffing structure that sustains branch operations, outreach, and evolving service demands.
- Support the CEO by providing access to development opportunities that benefit LPPL and the library community.
- Sustain balanced investment in physical and digital collections to meet changing community needs.
- Establish succession planning for Board leadership and key governance functions to support continuity.
- Establish a Board committee to support branch renovation projects.



**Board members
and library staff
receive a donation
of \$20,000 from the
Pelham Art Festival
in spring 2026.**