

DEPUTATION TO LIBRARY BOARD: 17 December 2025

The Conduct of the Chief Executive: Tracy Munusami

My deputation focusses on two concerns

- (1) The definition now used by Newmarket Public Library for “active cardholders” which differs significantly from the Provincial definition and
- (2) The quality and accuracy of the statistics which are presented to the Board and to the wider public. These are selective and are designed to mislead.

The Definition: The Board has an oversight role to ensure the Library operates within all applicable rules including guidance from the Province. It also has a fiduciary responsibility.

Last year, Newmarket Library received \$74,494 from the Province and an operating grant from the Town of \$3,781,775. Provincial grants only go to libraries which complete the Annual Survey of Public Libraries. They are expected to follow the guidance on how to complete the form.

The Chief Executive has been in post for over four years and on 7 April 2025 accurately told councillors:

“The definition of an “active library user” is someone who's used the library in the last 24 months... We do a survey every year to the Ministry. It's called the Annual Public Library Survey and that's the definition that they use.”

One week later she unilaterally changed the definition without approval of the Library Board or, so far as I can gather, the Board Chair.

The Board Chair told me as recently as 19 November 2025:

“I can confirm that we continue to report on active card holders using the provincial requirements and definition.”

This is incorrect.

The Chief Executive now defines an “active cardholder” as a NPL member with an unexpired library card regardless of whether it is used or not.

She substituted her own definition for the Provincial one knowing that it would boost membership numbers – the key metric widely used for assessing the

success (or otherwise) of the library. On 4 July 2025 the Chief Executive told me:

We now define an active cardholder as someone who still has access to the library collection. If your card expires, you no longer have access to the library collection and are no longer an active cardholder until you return to renew it.”

I explained the consequences to the Board Chair in my email to him of 20 November 2025¹:

Membership in both the Provincial and Newmarket definitions lasts for two years. The two years is not an issue. But Newmarket’s new definition removes the requirement to use the card within the two-year period.

We know from what the Chief Executive has told us that outreach sign-ups, for example, are not tracked to see if or when these new members first use their card to access library services. So, the library has no way of knowing when they become “active cardholders” according to the Provincial definition.

The Statistics Dashboard as presented to the Board uses the terminology “active memberships” and “new memberships”. Not active cardholders.

But when the Board receives the end of year total for “active memberships” the figure will need to be adjusted to meet the Provincial definition of active cardholder which involves using the card – not merely being in possession of one.

If it is not adjusted, the figure reported to the Province will be incorrect.

As I write this (Thursday 4 December 2025) the Board Chair has still not addressed this issue.

The Board should return to the status quo ante, reject the Chief Executive’s new definition and follow the provincial guidance.²

Misleading Statistics:

The Chief Executive presided over a data “modernisation” project which was part of the integration of the Library IT department and the Town’s.

¹ See Appendix 1.

² See Appendix 2. Definitions

Key data is now withheld from the Board but it is still available to the Chief Executive by using NPL's specialist software (known as "Polaris: integrated library system").

The Board receives data on new members and those new members signed up through outreach but not on members who have renewed or lapsed.³ This deliberate decision to hold back key data makes it difficult if not impossible for the Library Board to make a proper assessment of the Library's performance. The decision not to track members signed-up through outreach to see if they actually use the library is inexplicable given the emphasis the Board has placed on outreach work.⁴

The library has said this would infringe the privacy of members but the law of Ontario and the library's own privacy policy allows for the collection of such information.⁵

Library membership has only three variables: new members, renewing members and lapsed members. The Board gets figures on the first and this exclusive focus on new members distorts the true picture.

In 2024 the Library issued 9,476 membership cards to "first-time" members. This represents 42.6% of all members, up from 28.2% in 2023. These figures are way above trend with figures in the low to mid-teens going back to 2014.

When I asked the library if I could see the Excel spreadsheet and the formulas to see how the figures were generated, my request was refused. I reluctantly appealed to the Information and Privacy Commissioner who is currently making enquiries.

In her quest for higher membership numbers the Chief Executive has deliberately misled the Board and its Chair.

Conclusion: What action am I requesting?

- (1) The Library Board and the Chief Executive should follow the definition of "active cardholder" as set by the Province. And the figure reported to the Province in the Annual Survey of Public Libraries should be included in the Library's "Report to the Community 2025"

³ See Appendix 3. Membership and Active Cardholders 2020-September 2025

⁴ See Chronology 11 November and NPL's Privacy Statement in Supplementary Materials

⁵ See NPL Privacy Statement at Appendix 4.

- (2) The Chief Executive should report to the Library Board quarterly on membership renewals and lapses. The Board may wish to consider asking the Chief Executive for an annual report on the split between Newmarket and out-of-town (or non-resident) members and Library membership by ward. The Board has received such reports in the past. The latter at the request of Councillor Bisanz.
- (3) The Chief Executive should be asked to give a presentation to the Board on the capabilities of Polaris to aid members' understanding on what it can do.

I would welcome questions.

Gordon Prentice

Member, Newmarket Library.

CHRONOLOGY

3 August 2021: Tracy Munusami appointed Chief Executive of Newmarket Public Library.

September 2024: Library Board Action Tracking List – completed action items.

“IT integration: Library CEO and the Town’s Director, IT Services have agreement on how both departments can integrate for efficiency. Library integration into Town’s IT has commenced. Marketing and Communications: The Marketing and Communications Co-ordinator has worked with the Town of Newmarket’s Communication Department to leverage the Town’s Social Media Reach.”

“Completion/Withdrawal Date. End of December 2023. Migration to Town’s IT completed for October 16, 2023. Completed September 2024.”

January 2025: The province publishes the latest “Annual Survey of Public Libraries: Definitions” guide.

*“The Annual Survey of Public Libraries provides important data on library services in Ontario. It is one of the requirements for receiving the Public Library Operating, Pay Equity, and First Nation Salary Supplement grants, and **must be completed annually by public libraries, and organizations that contract for public library service.** We appreciate*

your co-operation in collecting and compiling accurate statistics for this survey.”

The guidance to Chief Executives (who must sign-off the form) says this:

A1.14 Number of Active Cardholders

State the number of library cardholders who have used their library card in the past two years. This field must be completed in order to submit your survey to the Ministry.

Note: *By entering your number of active cardholders in field A1.14 and saving it, you are then able to enter survey data and save it in subsequent sections.*

15 January 2025: Library Board receives the Strategic Operations report for December 2024. Membership renewals are tracked but are not regularly reported to the Board.

“Membership Renewal by Email Pilot Campaign: A follow-up email was sent in early in December to customers who had not renewed their memberships. This second email achieved a similar open rate (63%) compared to the first (61%) and resulted in a comparable number of renewals (284 vs. 251). Combined, both campaigns generated 535 renewals, leading to an overall renewal rate of 23%.”

4 April 2025: The Library’s “Report to the Community 2024” is posted on the NPL website.

7 April 2025: The Library Chief Executive and the Chair of the Board present the Library’s “Report to the Community 2024” to the Town’s Committee of the Whole. In answer to a question from Councillor Morrison the CEO defines an active library user:

“The definition of an “active library user” is someone who's used the library in the last 24 months... We do a survey every year to the Ministry. It's called the Annual Public Library Survey and that's the definition that they use.”

The Chief Executive uses “active cardholder” and “active user” interchangeably. (See 11 April 2025 below)

10 April 2025: I post a blog at ournewmarket.ca asserting there was no “significant growth in membership” in 2024 as claimed by the Board Chair in his foreword to the Report to the Community 2024. Membership had in fact fallen by 7.9%

11 April 2025: The Chief Executive contacts the civil servants responsible for maintaining the Annual Survey of Public Libraries database. She tells Douglas Davey:

“We also noticed a discrepancy in the active cardholders in our 2023 numbers. Is there a way for us to update that?”

And on 14 April 2025 she adds:

“It’s best if you just have the information for the system. We had 18,992 active users in 2023.”

On 4 July 2025 the Chief Executive says this was calculated

“using the new definition”.

14 April 2025: I try to contact the Board Chair, Darryl Gray, as I am concerned about the accuracy of the Library’s [Report to the Community 2024](#). I ask Councillor Morrison (who is my Ward Councillor) for a contact email for Mr Gray. Cllr Morrison passes the message on

“...that Tracy Munusami, CEO, is best suited to provide comments on information in the report as it relates to numerical data as she has direct access to this information and can respond in a more timely and effective manner.”

16 April 2025: The CEO informs me:

“The number you received from the provincial annual survey (for 2023 - 24,136) is incorrect. The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming does have an updated figure from us. We have been informed that the reports on the province’s site from 2023 will not be updated for the public, but the province does retain the record of the revised number from us.”

22 April 2025: I ask the Chief Executive:

“When was the Board advised that the figure for active library cardholders for 2023, submitted to the Province, was incorrect?”

25 April 2023: The Chief Executive replies:

“There is no record of this conversation happening at a Board meeting.”

3 June 2025: Newmarket Today reports:

“Library memberships have fluctuated despite annual reports to the community suggesting thousands of new members each year...

Newmarket CEO Tracy Munusami said the 2024 data reflects a new definition of active user, which excludes expired cards. The library aims

to have 27,000 active cardholders, which would reflect one-third of Newmarket residents.

“This year, the team is focused on improving retention and has launched an email campaign to make it easier for users to renew their cards online so they can continue to access services without interruption,” Munusami said.

Munusami said that the “new users” data does not include users who simply renewed their cards. However, the figure may include people who had cards but went inactive for some time before rejoining. Newmarket Library cards expire every two years, requiring a user to renew their card to access library services.”

4 June 2025: I ask the Chief Executive:

“Can you let me have the precise wording of the old definition of active members (pre-2024) and the precise wording of the new definition of active member? Was this change made by the province or by the Library? Was this change reported to the Library Chair or to the Library Board? If so, when did this happen?”

The CEO replies on 4 July 2025

“Some of these changes in reporting are based on direction from the library board.”

23 June 2025: The Ministry of Tourism Culture and Gaming agrees to release information in full following my Freedom of Information request. But as third parties had to be consulted the release would be delayed. The terms of my request:

Newmarket Public Library filed information for the annual provincial library survey 2023 which showed an active library membership of 24,136. The CEO of the library has told me this figure is incorrect and that a new number has been substituted although this revised number will not appear on the Public website. I request,

(a) the revised number

(b) a sight of the library's communication making the request for revision and the date it was received and the Province's response.

Time Period of the Records: 2024/01/01 to 2054/04/16

(Note I received the response on 5 August 2025)

4 July 2025: The Library Chief Executive informs me by email:

“Definition of Active Cardholders: We now define an active cardholder as someone who still has access to the library collection. If your card expires, you no longer have access to the library collection and are no longer an active cardholder until you return to renew it.”

The CEO claims, inaccurately, the new definition “aligns” with the provincial definition

“The change still aligns with the provincial definition of an “Active Library Cardholder.” With the introduction of the new definition, going forward, we will report membership numbers based on a process that will consistently remove expired cards. I acknowledge that we have reported some numbers in error during the transition to the new definition. We are working to correct this going forward.” (My underlining for emphasis.)

The CEO uses the new definition on 14 April 2025 to change the number previously filed with the Province:

“(There was) an error with the count of Active Library Card Holders as of December 31, 2023. The correct number is - 18,992 (Using our new definition) (My underlining)

8 July 2025: Douglas Davey, the Province’s Library Services Advisor, Culture Policy and Services Unit, Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming tells me:

“For the purposes of the ministry’s Annual Survey of Public Libraries, the ministry defines “Number of Active Cardholders” as the number of library cardholders who have used their library card in the past two years.”

Mr Davey says

“Public Libraries are responsible for the accuracy of the data they submit to the ministry... An explanation is not required by the ministry (for any correction) but may be requested depending on the nature of the change.”

He goes on:

“The revised number provided by Newmarket Public Library will be reflected in the next published annual reports which are expected to be released in early fall as well as in any new custom reports that are created.”

As of 4 December 2025, there has been no update in the figure for active cardholders shown in the ASPL 2024.

14 July 2025: Douglas Davey clarifies meaning of the instruction to state the number of active cardholders in the ASPL

“... this field is meant to capture cards that have been used in some way during the last two years.”

13 July 2025: I seek clarification from Douglas Davey on the precise meaning of “active cardholder”.

16 July 2025: Douglas Davey replies:

“Public Libraries are responsible for the accuracy of the data they submit to the ministry. The ministry has no concerns about the data point in question.” (ie using the library card at least once in two years)

28 August 2025: Decision letter on request A17-25-43. I requested a copy of (a) the original Excel spreadsheet which generated the number of new members in 2024 which was presented in the Statistics Dashboard report to the NPL Board at its meeting on 21 May 2025 and (b) the amended version of the Excel spreadsheet showing the updated and corrected numbers.

The Decision:

“Access is withheld under Section 15(a) and (b) of MFIPPA as the information contained in the first record was reportedly publicly at the May 21, 2025 Board Meeting and the information in the second record will be published at the September 17, 2025 Board meeting.”

15 September 2025: I write to the Chief Executive with four questions:

Q. This is the figure which appears in the 2024 Report to the Community as the number of new library members that year.

Does this figure represent only new (that is first time) members of the library or does this figure include existing members who are renewing? If it is the latter, can you let me have the split in the numbers for both categories?

Q. If, as you say, new cards do not include users who simply renewed their card, how many membership renewals were there in 2024?

Q. Can I also ask you to clarify the definition of “active Library user”?

Q. Does this new definition mean the cardholder is no longer required to use the library at least once within the two-year membership term to be categorised as an “active cardholder”?

The Chief Executive replies on 27 November 2025 after I request a response from her at the close of the Library Board meeting on 19 November 2025. (See below at 27 November 2025)

17 September 2025: I email Library Chair via NPL portal. I learn later my message was not delivered.

18 September 2025: I email the Chief Executive:

On 15 September 2025 I used the portal on the NPL website to contact the Library Board with a copy of the email of the same date on library membership data (with the subject line: Library Board Meeting 17 September 2025).

I used the Library portal as I do not have the Chair’s email address nor those of the other (non-councillor) Board Members.

I also copied the councillor members of the Board into the email I sent you.

Can you confirm my email to the Board via the NPL Portal for contacting Board members was delivered?

I told the Chair I had sent a request to him at noon yesterday via the NPL portal asking if it was OK to record the meeting. He checked his phone and found nothing. I find this perplexing and showed him a screenshot of the message I had sent earlier.

20 September 2025: I email Library Chair via NPL portal. My message was not delivered.

To Board Chair Darryl Gray cc all Board Members

Just a note to thank you for making me feel so welcome at the Board Meeting on 17 September 2025. Much appreciated.

I am though naturally disappointed that my request to the Library for sight of the Excel spreadsheet and formulas which generated the

membership statistics has been denied. Yesterday I (reluctantly) filed an appeal with the Information and Privacy Commissioner against the Library's decision to deny access.

Gordon Prentice

30 September 2025: Chief Executive assures me the problem with the Library Portal (which allows the public to contact the Board) has been fixed:

"We did have an issue with the portal on the website. Our IT department has resolved the issue. Thanks for letting us know."

15 October 2025: Town replies to an FoI request from a member of the public for:

Newmarket Public Library records:

- 1. Year-end statistical data (sometimes referred to as "Fourth Quarter Statistical Data") of the type noted above for the calendar years of 2023 and 2024 and;*
- 2. Third Quarter Statistical Data of the type noted above for the period covering January through September, 2025.:*

The Town's Records analyst replies:

"As you will read in our decision letter, the Newmarket Public Library has modernized their data collection practices and no longer tracks the numbers as seen in the examples you provided. The Library Board recently received a PowerPoint presentation (attached) which delivered a year by year, quarter by quarter comparison of the data that is now tracked. The presentation covers 2023 to quarter 2 of 2025. This is the only responsive record to your request."

31 October 2025: I email Library Chair via NPL portal. My message was not delivered.

I emailed the Chief Executive on 15 September 2025 and subsequently forwarded the email to you via this portal. Did you ever receive it?

The email raised a number of issues on NPL membership statistics and the definition of "active cardholder" which I hope you will address at the November Board meeting.

As before, I hope to sit in on the discussion.

Can you acknowledge receipt of this?

7 November 2025: NPL Chief Executive elaborates on her new definition:

“The definition of an “active cardholder” has not changed in terms of usage requirements, only that once the card is expired, they are no longer considered active. A library card provides access to a wide range of resources: digital and physical materials, programs, spaces, and services. We do not monitor or track individual usage, and there are no systems in place to measure all the possible ways one can access the many types of library services (i.e., main branch, vending machines, alternative locations, programming, or online services).”

8 November 2025: I write again to Douglas Davey returning to concerns about the integrity of the statistics in the province’s Annual Survey of Public Libraries. I raise a number of issues including Ms Munusami’s new definition of “active cardholder”. (see above, 7 November 2025)

“In plain English Ms Munusami’s new definition of “active cardholder” implies that anyone with an unexpired Newmarket Library Card is, ipso facto, an “active cardholder” whether or not that person uses the card. Clearly, someone wandering into the Library to look at the day’s newspapers and leaving immediately afterwards would not be recorded as having used the library under the provincial definition. But in Newmarket that would meet the test of being an active cardholder.”

“I believe the integrity of the statistics published by the Province in its Annual survey of Public Libraries is in question if an interpretation of what is an “active cardholder” is accepted when it is the polar opposite of the advice and guidance given by both the Province and the Ontario Library service.”

I ask for his views. (See below 17 November 2025)

11 November 2025: The Town’s Records Analyst on behalf of the library responds to an FoI request from a member of the public:

As of January 31st 2023, the Newmarket Public Library no longer charges a fee for non-resident memberships. The fee charged to these members was the reason the Library generated reports that distinguished between resident and non-resident memberships. Since the Library no longer differentiates between these two types of memberships this

information is no longer tracked, and it is not possible to generate reports based on that data. Additionally, the Library no longer tracks membership renewals. This was a manual process conducted by staff which has since ceased. Instead, the Library now reports on active memberships, also called active cardholders.

The following information can be provided. Some of these statistics are generated on a quarterly basis. Some may be able to be generated on a month by month basis.

- 1. Active NPL Cardholders*
- 2. New registrations*

The modernization undergone at the library has changed what data sets are tracked, and when and how they are reported on. These updates were made following changes to memberships, analysis of the relevancy of data being collected, and a scan of neighbouring municipalities to maintain consistency across the Region. Data collection and reporting is conducted as requested and approved by the Library Board. We will not be exploring or implementing new ways of utilizing Polaris in order to respond to your request. We will respond to the best of our ability with the tools, training, and data currently in use.

12 November 2025: Decision letter on my FoI Request A17-27-52

“For the latest date for which figures are available, I request sight of a record which shows the number of Newmarket Public Library card holders, signed up as a result of library outreach work in (a) 2023 (595 persons) and (b) 2024 (1,543 persons) who have used their library card since their enrolment to access library services.”

And the Decision:

“Up to date data on the number of library card holders signed up at outreach events for 2025 will be provided at the November 19, 2025 Library Board meeting. Therefore, access to these numbers is withheld under Section 15 (a) and (b) of MFIPPA.

Data on the number of cardholders who signed up at outreach events since 2023 and have since used their cards cannot be provided as this information does not exist. (my underlining for emphasis)

A library card provides access to a wide range of resources: digital and physical materials, programs, spaces, and services. We do not monitor or track individual usage and there are no systems in place to measure all the possible ways one can access the many types of library services (i.e., main branch, vending machines, alternative locations, programming in and outside of the library, or online services). To determine if a cardholder who signed up at an outreach event used their card, we would need to track each card holder who signs up at an event, monitor their use of library services and compile information across various systems. Cardholders do not have an expectation that their use of library services is monitored or that this type of data is compiled, and this would not be a permitted use of their personal information under section 31 (b) of MFIPPA, which requires that institutions only use personal information for the purpose for which it was maintained or compiled or for a consistent purpose.”

Section 31(b) quoted above states:

31 An institution shall not use personal information in its custody or under its control except,

(a) if the person to whom the information relates has identified that information in particular and consented to its use;

(b) for the purpose for which it was obtained or compiled or for a consistent purpose; or

(c) for a purpose for which the information may be disclosed to the institution under section 32 or under section 42 of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act.

NPL's Privacy Statement (attached as Appendix 4) says

The Library collects personal information to use exclusively for the following purposes:

1. To collect usage statistics to be reported in the aggregate to the public and to governing bodies;

2. The Library uses software that records the Internet Protocol (IP) addresses of computers that access our website, and uses services that analyze usage trends on our website, but makes no attempt to link these addresses with the identity of individuals, and does not use “cookies” to track users.

3. The Library uses software that records the login names of users on our computers, and that records the unique identifier of any device that connects to our wireless network...

13 November 2025: I email Library Chair via NPL portal. My message was not delivered.

I emailed you on 31 October 2025 via this portal but haven't heard from you. I am writing again to ask if we can meet before the next Board meeting on 19 November 2025. I can cover what I have to say in 10 minutes. I have some concerns about Library statistics and how these are generated.

You can reach me on the email address above or at 905 953 0140 (home) or 289 716 6064 (cell).

17 November 2025: Deborah Cope, Manager, Cultural Policy and Services Unit, Culture Branch at the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming, writes in response to my earlier email to Douglas Davey on The Integrity of the Statistics in the Province's Annual Survey of Public Libraries:

"The definitions are intended as guidelines to assist libraries in filling out the surveys as best they can, while understanding each library may have different systems in place to capture active users. (My underlining)

"We do not have concerns with the data that the Newmarket public library has shared to date. We will continue to work with all public libraries, including Newmarket Public Library, to support them as they fill out the survey each year."

18 November 2025: Library Board Chair tells me:

"Tracy is looking into why that portal isn't working."

19 November 2025: Board Chair, Darryl Gray, tells me by email:

"I can confirm that we continue to report on active card holders using the provincial requirements and definition."

26 November 2025: Revised decision on Request A17-25-43 (which sought a copy of (a) the original Excel spreadsheet which generated the number of new members in 2024 which was presented in the Statistics Dashboard report to the

NPL Board at its meeting on 21 May 2025 and (b) the amended version of the Excel spreadsheet showing the updated and corrected numbers.

The Revised Decision states:

“Enclosed is a copy of the requested spreadsheet.

The original Excel spreadsheet with the numbers presented on May 21, 2025 no longer exists.

It is a working document and was updated with the new numbers without saving the previous version.

This spreadsheet is created manually by staff who enter numbers based on several different sources including the Library’s ILS (integrated library system). The spreadsheet is used to track quarterly and annual numbers and then generate graphs for use in the quarterly reports to the Library Board.”

26 November 2025: I file the following Freedom of Information request with the Town:

“I request sight of the following records:(a) the communication from Newmarket Public Library to the Town’s IT Department which reported a malfunction in the Library’s website portal which allows members of the public to communicate with the Library Board and (b) the IT Department’s response confirming the portal malfunction had been fixed.”

27 November 2025: The Chief Executive replies to my email to her of 15 September 2025.

To answer your questions below:

Q. This is the figure which appears in the 2024 Report to the Community as the number of new library members that year.

Does this figure represent only new (that is first time) members of the library or does this figure include existing members who are renewing? If it is the latter, can you let me have the split in the numbers for both categories?

*A. The number of **new Library members** in the 2024 Report to the Community is the number of new library members. It does not include renewals.*

Q. If, as you say, new cards do not include users who simply renewed their card, how many membership renewals were there in 2024?

A. We did not track card renewals in 2024, so we do not have that information available.

Q. Can I also ask you to clarify the definition of “active Library user”?

A. We define an active cardholder as someone who still has access to the library collection. If your card expires, you no longer have access to the library collections and are no longer an active cardholder until you return to renew it.

Q. Does this new definition mean the cardholder is no longer required to use the library at least once within the two-year membership term to be categorised as an “active cardholder”?

A. The definition of an “active cardholder” has not changed in terms of usage requirements, only that once the card is expired, they are no longer considered active. A library card provides access to a wide range of resources: digital and physical materials, programs, and services. We do not monitor or track individual usage, and there are no systems in place to measure all the possible ways one can access library services (main branch, vending machines, alternative locations, programming or online services).

SUPPLEMENTARY MATERIAL

APPENDIX 1: My email to the Board Chair on 20 November 2025:

Hello again Darryl

Thank you for giving me a few minutes at last night’s Board meeting to tell members I was minded to bring a deputation to the Board in December.

I have been reflecting on last night and I don’t want you to think I am obsessing over something that you feel is essentially trivial.

When we spoke briefly afterwards I felt the point I was trying to make on “active cardholders” was lost. The fault was mine. I clearly hadn’t expressed myself well enough.

You told me in your email yesterday:

“I can confirm that we continue to report on active card holders using the provincial requirements and definition.”

As I explained in my email yesterday, the Province defines “active cardholders” as library cardholders who have used their library card in the past two years.

NPL, on the other hand, defines an active cardholder as a library member with an unexpired card, whether or not it has been used.

Changed definition

Newmarket Library changed its definition of active cardholder earlier this year. I still don’t know when the Board approved this, if indeed it did. I should have asked you last night. Can you tell me?

Personally, I don’t believe for one moment that Board members would have approved the new definition had they been told it did not correspond with the provincial definition.

Membership in both the Provincial and Newmarket definitions lasts for two years. The two years is not an issue. But Newmarket’s new definition removes the requirement to use the card within the two-year period.

We know from what the Chief Executive has told us that outreach sign-ups, for example, are not tracked to see if or when these new members first use their card to access library services. So, the library has no way of knowing when they become “active cardholders” according to the Provincial definition.

The Statistics Dashboard as presented to the Board uses the terminology “active memberships” and “new memberships”. Not active cardholders.

But when the Board receives the end of year total for “active memberships” the figure will need to be adjusted to meet the Provincial definition of active cardholder which involves using the card – not merely being in possession of one.

If it is not adjusted, the figure reported to the Province will be incorrect.

Why does this matter?

Even if they illustrate the library narrative as you suggested, the statistics coming out of the library are either correct or incorrect. There is no middle way.

The Polaris integrated library system allows reports to be generated which would capture the date when new members become “active cardholders”.

But the Chief Executive has decided not to capture this figure for reasons which I believe are wholly preposterous.

Membership renewals

I was disappointed there was no discussion about the Statistics Dashboard report for the third quarter of 2025.

I find it bizarre that the library no longer reports membership renewals – even though the figures are available. I mentioned the Strategic Operations report from December 2024 which talks about chasing up members who haven’t renewed. So, clearly, the figures can be pulled.

I mentioned to Kelly there are only three variables when it comes to library membership – new members, renewing members and lapsed members.

We have established that the 9,476 new members which featured in the Library’s Report to the Community 2024 are all first-time members. But, incredibly, we are not told how many members renewed their membership.

I initially thought that renewals – or at least some of them – were being put into the first-time members column to artificially boost the numbers but the Chief Executive has categorically denied that to be the case. I hope the Information and Privacy Commissioner will allow me access to the spreadsheets and formula which would allow me to make sense of all this.

Library Portal

Finally, can I mention one other thing that has been bothering me?

Is the Board aware that there has been a problem with the Library Portal which prevented messages from being delivered? On 30 September 2025 the Chief Executive assured me the problem had been resolved. It clearly hadn’t. It was still not working on 13 November 2025 when my message to you via the portal was undelivered.

At the close of the meeting I asked the Chief Executive if she would reply to my email to her of 15 September 2025. She told me she thought you had answered.

In your email to me of 18 November you said

“Tracy and the team are the experts in this area”

and I would very much like to hear directly from her. She said she would respond to me.

Gordon

Appendix 2: Definitions document

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Gaming (MTCG)

Annual Survey of Public Libraries (ASPL)

Definitions

2024 Collection



January 2025

Appendix 3: Membership and Active Cardholder Statistics

NPL Membership 2020-September 2025

Year (2025 is from 1 Jan-30 September)	Existing Active Members on 1 January	New (or first-time) membership cards issued during year.	New members as % of end-of-year "active" members. (2025 is for January-September)	Total existing + new members joining NPL during the year	Members renewing during the year (NPL has two year membership)	Non renewals (lapsed members)	Active members on 31 December as reported to the Province. (2025 is to September only)
2025	22,234	8,579	32.5%	30,813	Not reported	Not reported	26,393
2024	18,992	9,476	42.6%	28,468	Not reported	Not reported	22,234
2023	27,780	5,357	28.2%	33,137	Not reported	Not reported	18,992
2022	23,589	3,924	14.1%	27,513	4,331	4,064	27,780
2021	24,877	2,561	10.8%	27,438	4,605	8,454	23,589
2020	23,115	2,150	8.6%	25,265	3,059	3,447	24,877

Note: The number of active cardholders on 31 December 2023 as initially filed with the Province was 24,136. On 11 April 2025 NPL's Chief Executive amended the number of active cardholders to 18,992. The Province's website still gives the original figure.

Appendix 4: NPL Privacy Statement



Privacy Statement

Newmarket Public Library is committed to protecting the privacy of our members and all patrons who visit our library or website. We are governed by the Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (MFIPPA) and the Public Libraries Act.

- The Library collects personal information to use exclusively for the following purposes:
 - To administer the Library's borrowing, materials reservation, program registration, online resource, and computer access programs;
 - To collect usage statistics to be reported in the aggregate to the public and to governing bodies;
 - To collect outstanding debts, including through a collection or credit reporting agency;
 - To identify individuals suspected of contravening the Library's Code of Conduct or Public Computer Access & Use Policy or any applicable law.
- Personal information may only be accessed by authorized staff, by you, by the parent or guardian of a child under 16, or by another individual that you have authorized. Sharing your card and/or logon information with another individual indicates your authorization.
- Personal information will not be shared with any third party except as permitted by law, such as for police investigations, debt collections, or child welfare.
- You have a right to access any information the Library has collected about you with proof of identity, subject to any limitations in MFIPPA.
- A history of library materials borrowed and returned and for which no fines or fees have been payable is only maintained with your express consent, and may only be accessed by you or another authorized individual as above.
- Materials reserved for you may be visible to other users in a self-service area but will only be identified by abbreviated versions of your surname and your membership number.
- In compliance with Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL), your express consent is required for the Library to use your contact information to send you messages promoting our services.
- The Library does not share your personal information with online resource vendors, but we do allow them to confirm the validity of your library card number. Any information that these vendors separately collect from you by any means is subject to the vendor's own privacy policy.
- The Library uses software that records the Internet Protocol (IP) addresses of computers that access our website, and uses services that analyze usage trends on our website, but makes no attempt to link these addresses with the identity of individuals, and does not use "cookies" to track users.
- The Library uses software that records the login names of users on our computers, and that records the unique identifier of any device that connects to our wireless network. In rare cases it may be used to identify individuals or devices suspected of contravening the law or a Library policy as listed above, and potentially shared with law enforcement. However, the Library does not use any software that records the web activity of any users on our network.
- The Library does not share any personal information with its Internet Service Provider (ISP) except as may be required by law.
- The Library records video surveillance of the facility premises, including the exterior. This video is used solely by authorized staff to enforce Library policy, and may be shared with law enforcement but not with any other third party.

If you have any further questions on privacy please direct them to the Chief Executive Officer of the Library.

September 2016