

HHPL welcomes new management



From left, new Hastings Highlands Public Library board chair Marjory McPherson and new interim CEO Rod Moffitt after his second day on the job Feb. 9. Moffitt has committed to six months and possibly longer with the library, depending on what its future. / SARAH SOBANSKI Staff

By Sarah Sobanski

There are a few new faces at Hastings Highlands Public Library, including a new CEO.

The library has hired retired local school teacher Rod Moffitt as its interim CEO. His contract is for six months with the possibility for extension, said new library board chair Marjory McPherson.

‘Just because things are in a little bit in flux,’ said McPherson, noting the upcoming election and the possibility of a union library being discussed for North Hastings. McPherson chaired the library board’s January meeting following former chair Kathy Irwin’s resignation in December.

At its Jan. 24 meeting, the board changed the name of its more than \$30,000 ‘Account Balance Fund’ to ‘Special Projects Library Fund.’ The fund was brought to light last year when the library chose to be audited separately from the municipality.

McPherson said she didn’t know yet what the fund would be used for but that it opens up possibilities for the library that weren’t there before while remaining within its budget.

‘I think that now that we know that it exists, which we never knew that it exist[ed] in spite of what was said [that] somehow or other we should have known that it exist[ed],’ she said. ‘It looks as though it’s possible that if we see a need or even a possibility whether it’s services within the library that we might be able to dip into that fund.’

She added, ‘We can’t see the future that well, yet, we have no idea but we know definitely we need someone for six months at least.’

Moffitt was an elementary school teacher for 30 years. He started in York Region. He moved to the area in 1999 to teach at North Hastings Senior Elementary School, then Bancroft Public School and finally, York River Public School.

‘Between 2000 and 2007 I was 50 per cent vice president of both schools, senior elementary and then when I moved to Bancroft Public School,’ he said noting his administrative experience which McPherson said made him stand out up against other candidates. He officially retired Jan. 31 and started at the library Feb. 8.

‘He put in his letter, ‘I officially retire Jan. 31 and I’ll be ready to work Monday.’ And I thought, ‘Really?’’ laughed McPherson.

‘I thought well that would work with me and [it’s] just sort of a transition from working full time? [to part time]. I thought it would be a good thing,’ said Moffitt. He explained his true passion was teaching music, but because that wasn’t available full time, he taught almost every subject over his career. He was a ‘prep-coverage teacher.’

Moving forward, Moffitt said he plans to get his ‘feet under’ him and to learn the ins and outs of the library.

‘I see more down the road having ideas,’ said Moffitt. ‘I just, right now, want to see how things operate and go from there.’

He added, ‘I would just like to be a part of things happening here and have a fresh outlook on things and contribute where I can.’

Moffitt met Hastings Highlands council at their regular meeting Feb. 7. There council also welcomed two new members to the HHPL board, Valerie Loney and Garfield McAdam.

?A good library can offer programs for all ages and a wide range of resources to meet those goals. In particular, I believe we need to run events and activities to develop skills, interests, and talents in adolescents who so often feel disconnected from their community and confused about their futures, and therefore struggle socially and emotionally,? Loney said in her application letter. Both are also retired teachers. McAdam brings previous library board experience.