



Western Counties Regional Library

July 10, 2025

Municipality of the District of Argyle

Dear Council Members,

I am writing on behalf of the Western Counties Regional Library (WCRL) Board to inform you of the instability of library services in the region and express our concerns over the future sustainability of libraries in Southwestern Nova Scotia.

Decades of inadequate funding and increased pressures on libraries have meant that employee wages remain low while expectations for a broadening of services continue to rise. WCRL has "trimmed the fat" in every area from library hours to frontline and management positions. This year, the WCRL Board made the difficult decision to approve a budget which sees the library materials (books) budget cut by 40% and branch staff coverage hours significantly reduced, resulting in a further reduction in services. This was done to stave off permanent branch closures.

Libraries are places where people go because they hope to improve their lives. Public libraries are welcoming, accessible spaces that bring people together and are important partners in supporting key determinants of health – making sure everyone has access to reliable and accurate information. Staff can help people navigate questions they have, find entertainment, participate in lifelong learning opportunities, develop literacy skills and access safe places to be. They are community spaces that are in high demand and we want to be able to provide the services that our communities are asking of us.

In September 2024, the Library Funding Review Committee submitted funding recommendations for public libraries to government for review. No new funding was included in the provincial budget for 2025-26 fiscal year and we have not heard officially as to the recommendations. While disappointed, we are hopeful there will soon be a resolution that recognizes the important role libraries play in communities.

We ask that your municipality help us by writing a letter to the Province of Nova Scotia urging them to review, deliberate and finalize the recommendations for sustainable library funding by November 2025. Without appropriate and timely action, vital community institutions will be lost.

Thank you in advance for considering our ask. We welcome an opportunity to speak to you and your council about this request and about regional library services. You may contact our Executive Director, Erin Comeau, at director@westerncounties.ca or 902-742-2486 ext. 225 if you are interested in a meeting.

Yours sincerely,



Sherry Thorburn Irvine
Board Chair, WCRL
Cc Kathy Bourque
Enclosures: WCRL Funding Review Summary

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