



November 29, 2019

Town of Lakeshore
419 Notre Dame Street
Belle River, ON N0R 1A0

Attention: Mayor Tom Bain & Lakeshore Council

Dear Mayor Bain,

On behalf of the Essex County Library Board (ECLB), I am responding to your November 8, 2019 correspondence sent to the Essex County Library Board requesting an update of the plans for library service within the community of Stoney Point. The Board reviewed your letter at our regular meeting of November 27 and agreed that a response supporting the continuation of library services in our communities remains the intention of the Essex County Library Board.

With this in mind, and as you are certainly aware, there are both immediate and long-term concerns that need attention at the current facility. As of October 24, 2019, the Essex County Library (ECL) suspended library service through the Stoney Point Branch due to the presence of *Stachybotrys* and *Chaetomium* (black) mold spores detected within the Library space. The health and safety of ECL staff and patrons are the primary concern for the Board and led to the decision to suspend service.

At this time, The Essex County Library Board cannot resume services from this location until the following issues are addressed and documentation is provided to confirm a safe work environment for ECL employees and community patrons:

- proper abatement procedures for both the removal of mold from the building as well as for the removal of hazardous materials (Asbestos) that may have been removed or disturbed in the building.
- a thorough cleaning of all library spaces and surfaces is completed, as recommended in the context of the October 24, 2019 Air Quality Report.
- completion of a follow up Air Quality test and submission of the documentation to the Board to support a safe and healthy work environment for employees and the public.

- the building and the Library are compliant with all Fire and Building Code regulations for a mixed occupancy facility. The Town/Owner will install and be responsible for any equipment needed for fire or safety purposes at their expense.
- during the period that the building is not compliant with Building or Fire code regulation, the owner and/or the Town assume responsibility for and replacement cost of any damage or loss of Essex County Library equipment, resources or furnishing.
- ECLB recognizes that residents have the right to smoke cigarettes, vaping devices and ingest/ inhale cannabis products within their own residential/ apartment areas. As the Library is a place of employment the Board requests that the Owner and Town put measures and barriers in place that will mitigate the risk of transfer of fumes or unhealthy chemicals/ agents into the Library space.

As the closure has an impact on the Essex County Library's ability to schedule staff and plan services within the community, the Board asks that the Town of Lakeshore provide written confirmation to the above by December 31, 2019.

After this date, if the Town of Lakeshore cannot ensure the Stoney Point facility is in operating condition, the Board would like to take into consideration and proceed with the removal of their equipment and resources to be re-allocated within our library system. Furthermore, the Board would commit to implement some of the following options as an expanded service delivery for the Town of Lakeshore.

- reallocate staffing hours within the Community Team of Lakeshore to support service delivery through the Lakeshore community at your Toldo, Libro and Comber branches.
- adjust hours at the Toldo Branch to better support community access to resources.
- investigate the delivery of library programs and services at alternate site locations.
- provide Mobile Outreach (2020) - the Essex County Library plans to implement the use of a mobile makerspace/ outreach vehicle to deliver programs and service to non-traditional library locations (parks, schools, community centres, community events, etc....)
- consider relocation of services to the Stoney Point community, preferably in a shared facility setting.
- consider alternative delivery methods of resources to the residents of Stoney Point.

These efforts would be to ensure there is not a 'net loss' of access to library services in Lakeshore as a whole or within the Essex County Library System.

If the Town can confirm and provide documentation for a safe work environment by December 31, 2019, the Essex County Library Board will commit to providing Library service at the Stoney Point branch until December 31, 2024. As of 2025, the Essex County Library Board will be responsible to ensure that all library facilities meet the accessibility regulations for a public/

municipal service as required by the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) to make Ontario services accessible by 2025. In order to address AODA compliance issues the Board will need a commitment from the Town of Lakeshore that they will renovate and upgrade any facility issues as identified by the Act. This includes but not limited to accessible washrooms, accessible door access, and accessible foyer/entranceway.

The Essex County Library Board remains committed to providing library service to the residents of the Town of Lakeshore. We recognize there is a relationship between the local municipality who owns or provides the facilities, and the Board who provides direction for the delivery of library services. As the Board continues to investigate alternatives to traditional library services, we remain mindful of the historical relevancy of the small community libraries. We would like to work with the Town to provide information and library service through a means that is fiscally responsible and still mindful of your community needs.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nelson Santos', written in a cursive style.

Nelson Santos
Chairman, Essex County Library Board

C: Robin Greenall, CEO/Chief Librarian, ECL
Secretary/Treasurer ECLB

Truper McBride
CAO/Town of Lakeshore