



Report to The Nation Municipality Public Library Board

Report Number: REP-LB-07-2026

Subject: Proposal to hire contract cataloguer

Date of the meeting: April 23, 2026

Prepared by: Christina Gratto – Library Manager

Circulated to and/or collaborated with: Pierre Leroux - CEO

Approval: Pierre Leroux - CEO

In agreement with the recommendation based on the contents of this report.

Recommendation

That the board approves the engagement of a contract cataloguer on a time-limited basis of 270 hours, at a recommended rate of \$35/hour, with scope and scheduling to be confirmed in consultation with the CEO.

Financial Considerations

The total projected cost at the recommended rate of \$35/hour is \$9,450. The full range depending on the successful candidate's qualifications is \$8,100–\$12,150 (at \$30–\$45/hour). Candidate sourcing will be conducted through Ontario Library Service (OLS) and Algonquin College at no additional cost, with a public job posting pursued as a secondary option if needed.

Financial implications have been verified with annual budget and / or approved applicable policy or by-law: YES

Context

When the Library Manager assumed the position, approximately 200 books were already awaiting cataloguing. The backlog has since grown due to community donations (~300 items), pending Commonwell Grant-funded purchases (~100 items), and a planned budget purchase (~200 items), bringing the total estimated backlog to approximately 800 items. The Commonwell Grant carries a requirement that all funded purchases be completed within the 2026 calendar year, making timely cataloguing a compliance obligation.

The library currently operates with two staff members across three branches. Competing operational responsibilities — including branch coverage, ILS transition management, grant administration, programming, and general administration — leave insufficient capacity to address a backlog of this scale or to provide the hands-on training volunteers require to catalogue independently.

Report

A contract cataloguer would bring professional cataloguing expertise to a clearly scoped, time-limited project, providing reliable and consistent progress on the backlog independent of volunteer availability. This would result in faster and equitable public access to new materials, relief of administrative burden on the Library Manager, and an opportunity to provide introductory training to two existing volunteers as part of the engagement.

Two scheduling options are proposed, both capped at 270 hours:

Option A — Structured Schedule: 3 days/week x 7 hours/day x ~13 weeks (~3 months). Fixed end date; no extension anticipated.

Option B — Flexible Schedule: 2 days/week x 7 hours/day x up to 17 weeks (~4 months). Not to exceed 270 hours total. Extension within this cap at CEO discretion.

The 270 hours are allocated as follows: ~187 hours to catalogue the 800-item backlog (estimated at ~30 items/day), with remaining hours for ILS record review and cleanup, correction of migrated records, and introductory volunteer training. Scheduling would be coordinated to align with the Library Manager's branch coverage obligations.

The preferred candidate would have demonstrated experience in library cataloguing; bilingual (English/French) capacity is considered a strong asset given the library's bilingual mandate.

Rate	Total Cost (270 hrs)
\$30/hour	\$8,100
\$35/hour (<i>recommended</i>)	\$9,450
\$45/hour	\$12,150

Relevance to priorities

The library's primary mandate is to serve the public. A backlog of approximately 800 uncatalogued items represents a significant portion of the collection that is inaccessible through regular circulation. If community members are unable to access new and varied materials, the library risks losing patrons and undermining its core service commitment.

Communication Plan

Once a decision has been made, the library will work with the Communications team in the event that a public posting is required outside of existing connections with Algonquin College and OLS. No broader communications requirement is anticipated for this request at this time.

Other Option/Options to the Recommendation

Continuing to rely solely on the Library Manager and volunteers to address the backlog is not a sustainable option given current operational demand. The backlog will continue to grow as new collections are added, further limiting public access. Delaying action also risks non-compliance with the Commonwell Grant's 2026 completion requirement.

Attachments

Cataloguer Proposal