

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: September 21, 2023
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Meeting Date: September 27, 2023

TO: Library Board
FROM: Kevin Lowe, Chair, Governance Committee
SUBJECT: Board Self Evaluation Survey

SUMMARY

This report provides the 2022 Board Self Evaluation Survey for planning in 2023. The survey was last reviewed in the fall of 2022.

PURPOSE

This report is for information.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board receive this report for information.

INDIGENOUS CONSIDERATIONS

Truth and Reconciliation is a strategic priority for VPL that is considered across library policy and operations, and is incorporated in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan. In November 2022, the VPL Board approved the Indigenous Rights and Reconciliation Strategy. Training is offered to ensure that trustees are prepared for discussions that support these strategies, and within the self-evaluation, trustees are asked whether the Board considers the impacts of its decisions on Indigenous peoples, encourages staff to consult with local Indigenous communities, and is committed to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

BACKGROUND

The Board self-evaluation survey is designed to evaluate how well the Board understands its responsibilities individually and as a group and to identify areas for training and development. The Board Chair and Executive Assistant work together to produce and distribute the web-based

survey in early November each year, and results are discussed at a subsequent meeting. Trustees modified the report in 2020 to clarify and to reduce the number of questions.

DISCUSSION

The Governance Committee discussed the 2022 self-evaluation results at its June 2023 meeting as part of the discussion of training and development needs for the Board.

The Committee needs to consider whether any revisions are needed to the survey for 2023, and appoint 1-2 trustees to review the content if necessary and lead the process.

2022 Vancouver Public Library Board Self-Evaluation Questions

Roles and Responsibilities

1. I understand my responsibility to provide good governance to the Library, to act in the best interests of the Library as a whole, and to carry out my responsibilities in a manner that enhances public trust and support.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

2. I have read and understand the Board Procedure Policy and the Board Governance Principles, which set out expectations for me as a Trustee.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

3. I understand that if a conflict of interest arises, I must inform the Board Chair and may be required to abstain from participating in the matter.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

4. I understand that the Board is a governance board and that operational and administrative decisions are delegated to the Chief Librarian.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

5. I understand that the Board instructs the Chief Librarian through written Board policies, the Strategic Plan, Budget approvals and Board motions.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

6. I am familiar with the annual process for evaluating the Chief Librarian’s performance.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

7. I am familiar with the roles of the Board Chair, Vice Chairs and Committee Chairs.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Strategic Planning, Policies and Finances

8. I am familiar with, and if asked could explain, the Library’s vision of “an informed, engaged, and connected city” and its mission to be “a free place for everyone to discover, create, and share ideas and information.”

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

9. I am familiar with the priorities and goals set out in the Library’s Strategic Plan.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

10. The Board sets its priorities based on the Strategic Plan and reviews the Library’s progress against the Strategic Plan on a regular basis.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I Don’t know

11. I have access to all Board policies and am generally familiar with them.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

12. VPL's Operating and Capital Budgets are aligned with its vision, mission and values and Library expenditures are in line with VPL's Strategic Plan.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I Don't know

13. The Board ensures that the Library maintains effective internal financial and management controls and has identified and managed any major risks.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I Don't know

14. The Board reviews reports on the Library's finances and budget throughout the year.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I Don't know

15. The Board assists in setting fundraising priorities for, and is aware of the efforts of, the VPL Foundation and Friends of the VPL.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- I Don't know

Community Relations, Partners and Advocacy

16. I am supported in my role as an advocate for the Library. The Chief Librarian works with the Board to summarize key messages, talking points and success stories, as needed.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

17. The Board listens to and considers the views of Library patrons, stakeholders, partner groups and others with an interest in the Library's work.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

18. The Board considers the impacts of its decisions on Indigenous peoples, encourages staff to consult with local Indigenous communities, and is committed to advancing Truth and Reconciliation.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

19. I am familiar with municipal issues affecting the Library (e.g. City funding and political processes).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

20. I met with or communicated with my City council liaison multiple times throughout the year about issues affecting the Library.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

21. I am familiar with provincial and federal issues affecting libraries generally, and VPL in particular (e.g. copyright, provincial funding).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

22. The Board receives regular reports on issues affecting Library staff, through updates from the CUPE 391 representative and the Chief Librarian.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

23. I am familiar with the role and activities of the BC Library Trustees Association (BCLTA).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

24. I am familiar with the role and activities of the Friends of the Vancouver Public Library.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

25. I am familiar with the role and activities of the VPL Foundation.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

26. I am sufficiently familiar with the role of other Library-related organizations, including the Ministry of Education, InterLINK, Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC), British Columbia Library Association (BCLA) and the Canadian Federation of Library Associations- Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA-FCAB).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

27. I understand how and when to report to the Board about my activities as a liaison to InterLINK, BCLTA, VPL Foundation, Friends of the VPL, or VPL Trust, as applicable.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not applicable

Board Meetings, Support and Succession

28. My contributions are appreciated at Board meetings. Trustees listen to me and treat me with respect, even when we disagree.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

29. I feel comfortable raising my questions and concerns during Committee meetings and Board meetings, even when I believe others may disagree with me.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

30. The Chief Librarian & CEO and staff listen to me and consider my comments. My questions are answered thoroughly and respectfully.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

31. The materials provided in the meeting packages provide me with sufficient information to make an informed and effective decision.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

32. When I have a question or concern, I know how to obtain the information I need. I feel comfortable reaching out to the Chief Librarian, Board Chair or other Trustees for help.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

33. Trustees are given opportunities to develop their skills and understanding of Library issues, such as through participation in Library-related workshops.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

34. As a more experienced Trustee (on the Board for more than 3 years), I reach out to newer Trustees to offer help and mentorship, as needed.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not applicable

35. As a newer Trustee (on the Board for 3 years or less), I feel my needs for support and mentorship are being met.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not applicable

36. I am familiar with the support and resources available to me through the BC Library Trustees Association.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

37. I am encouraged to consider taking up a leadership role on the Board, such as becoming a Committee Chair, Vice Chair or Chair.

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Summary

38. I enjoy being a Vancouver Public Library Trustee and plan to continue volunteering on the Board next year (assuming I am re-appointed, if applicable).

- Strongly Agree
- Agree
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Not applicable

39. I have been a trustee on the Vancouver Public Library Board for:

- Three years or less
- More than three years

40. Any additional comments (including any suggestions for training or development):