
Minutes of the VPL Board Governance Committee Regular Meeting held at 5:00 p.m. on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 at the Level 8 Morris J Wosk Boardroom.

Present: Tim Bottomer
Kevin Lowe – Chair
Raji Mangat
Karen Spears
Ziming Yang

Management

Present: Christina de Castell – Chief Librarian & CEO

Recording

Secretary: Chrysalyn Tolentino – Executive Assistant

Board Chair Lowe acknowledged that VPL operates on the unceded lands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh peoples, and that he and Trustee Spears join from the unceded lands of the Lkwungen, Songhees, and Esquimalt people, colonially known as Victoria. He also acknowledged the protests and counter-protests happening across the country, and the importance of the security and lifting up of Indigenous two-spirit, queer and gender diverse people on a day when speaking of these identities is being challenged.

ADMINISTRATION:

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Victor Huang

THAT the Committee approve the Governance Committee meeting agenda as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Minutes

The Chief Librarian & CEO presented the draft minutes of the meeting held June 28, 2023 for approval by the Committee.

Moved by Karen Spears

THAT the draft minutes of the meeting held June 28, 2023 be approved as amended.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES & PROCEDURES

1. Chief Librarian & CEO Review Process

Christina de Castell, Chief Librarian & CEO, noted that the report provides an overview of the process and a recommendation that the Governance Committee assign a trustee or trustees to lead the 2023 process. She noted that Trustee Spears updated the review process following 2022, and that the updated policy will be considered by the Board next week. The Committee assigned Trustees Spears and Yang to lead the 2023 process.

Moved by Victor Huang

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board accept the report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Board Self-Evaluation 2023

Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell presented a report providing background for the Board self-evaluation process and recommending that the Committee appoint a trustee or trustees to review the content and lead the process for the Board's self-evaluation in 2023. Board Chair Lowe suggested the review consider a dedicated section related to Indigenous Rights and Reconciliation. The Committee assigned Vice Chair Mangat and Trustee Huang to lead the Board self-evaluation process.

Moved by Raji Mangat

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board receive the report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Trustee Recruitment

Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell informed the Committee that the prospective trustee information session will be held on Monday, September 25 and five people have registered. Chief Librarian de Castell noted that a call for interest was sent to Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations, and that she had received a question about eligibility based on residence. She encouraged them to express interest regardless of residential address, and that VPL would explore options if applicable. She reminded the Committee that the Board usually considers gaps in skills and experience as part of the application process. Trustees agreed to use the Board Skills Matrix survey, and that the Board Chair will review and distribute this. They inquired if VPL directly reaches out to prospects when gaps need to be filled. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell responded that we have done this in the past, and

noted that we don't have control over Council's decision on appointments, so trustees who reach out to individuals should communicate this. Board Chair Lowe confirmed that he, Vice Chair Mangat, and Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell will review the applications and provide recommendations to the Council Nominating Committee.

4. Indigenous Learning Plan

Board Chair Lowe reviewed the report to discuss education and training related to Indigenous-specific racism, rights and reconciliation. He noted that Indigenous Rights and Reconciliation is a priority for VPL, and training would enable trustees to understand and reflect on settler colonialism and how it operates, so that the Board is capable of moving to action to eradicate Indigenous-specific racism and discrimination and advance work towards Rights and Reconciliation. He highlighted ideas on how to advance this work including in-person workshops, cultural tours, scheduling trustees to deliver a land acknowledgement, and discussing and sharing learnings at Board and Committee meetings.

Trustee suggested incorporating a separate agenda item on Reconciliation as an enhancement to land acknowledgement where a trustee could share a learning or reading; supported attending cultural events as a method of learning; and the idea of a champion for Indigenous Rights and Reconciliation that would be separate from the Board Chair. They considered how the Board would measure success, including how comfortable trustees are in speaking about Indigenous issues, how committed trustees are to advancing Indigenous rights, where trustees feel they are not yet succeeding, and personal changes over time, and that these could be measured through the self-evaluation survey. This could also include asking Indigenous trustees to share their perceptions about Board safety and commitment. Trustees generally preferred encouraging trustees to attend training or events, especially those organized for staff, versus a mandatory approach. Staff noted that the Board has mandatory training for FOIPPA compliance and financials, and these are usually scheduled as pre-Board workshops to allow trustees to attend in person when the Board is meeting in-person. Board Chair Lowe noted next steps will be to create a formal Board training schedule for 2024 and bring this forward to a future Board meeting for approval. We will also be seeking trustee nominations on who can lead/champion this initiative next year.

Moved by Tim Bottomer

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board receive the report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 5:59 p.m.

Kevin Lowe, Chair

Christina de Castell, Secretary

DRAFT