
Minutes of the VPL Board Services, Finance & Human Resources Committee Regular Meeting at 6:05 p.m. on Wednesday, September 20, 2023 via Zoom.

Present: Tim Bottomer — Chair
Victor Huang
Kevin Lowe
Melody Ma
Ziming Yang

Management

Present: Christina de Castell — Chief Librarian & CEO
Maryn Ashdown — Director, Neighbourhood & Youth Services
Dawn Ibey — Director, Central Library & Public Service
Julia Morrison — Director, Corporate Services & CFO
Carol Nelson — Director, Planning & Communications

Recording

Secretary: Chrysalyn Tolentino — Executive Assistant

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Committee Chair Bottomer acknowledged that our work and our facilities are on the traditional and unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and the upcoming National Day of Truth and Reconciliation. He reflected on the words of an Indigenous woman speaking at the counter-protests held at the Vancouver Art Gallery on the importance of action in Reconciliation and not just talking about it, and her comments that the issues of marginalization and vulnerability often intersect, and the solidarity displayed between Indigenous women and 2SLGBTQ+ groups in the face of pressures.

ADMINISTRATION:**1. Approval and Additions to the Agenda**

Moved by Ziming Yang

THAT the Committee approve the in camera meeting agenda as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Minutes

The Chief Librarian & CEO presented the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held June 21, 2023 for approval by the Committee.

Moved by Victor Huang

THAT the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held June 21, 2023 be approved as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

POLICIES

3. Policy Rescissions

Carol Nelson, Director of Planning and Communications, noted that as part of VPL's annual review and prioritization of policies, staff have assessed that a number of Board policies are operational in nature and are recommending that these be rescinded by the Board and replaced by administrative policies. She reviewed that the Board policy "Cards for VPL Staff" is redundant as it is covered by the existing Administrative policy "Staff Borrowing"; that the "Parking Violations" policy should be rescinded since parking information can be provided on the website. She noted that "Employees Driving Library (City) Owned or Leased Vehicles, Responsibility of" and "Travel" policies are operational in nature and will be converted into administrative policies.

Board Chair Lowe provided a recap of the discussion at the Community Relations, Planning and Development Committee and noted that staff will be adding a list of administrative policies to the Board Orientation binder so that trustees are aware of these and can request them as needed. Trustees sought clarification on the travel policy and whether a Board policy should exist to parallel a City Council policy, and whether there was an over-arching financial policy requiring that VPL follow City policies. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell clarified that the Guidelines on the Relationship between Vancouver City Council and Vancouver Public Library require that VPL follow City of Vancouver financial policies. The Committee agreed to defer rescinding the Travel Policy and directed staff to clarify with the City whether the policy is Council or an administrative policy and to bring forward a parallel approach to the City at a future meeting.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the amended motion was raised:

Moved by Kevin Lowe

THAT the SFHR Committee recommend that the Board rescind the following policies as of October 31, 2023 and direct staff to create administrative policies where staff deem appropriate:

- *Employees Driving Library (City) Owned or Leased Vehicles, Responsibility of*
- *Cards for VPL Staff*
- *Parking Violations*

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

FINANCIALS

4. Provincial Enhancement Grant

Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell presented a report that provides information about planned allocation of funding provided through the Provincial Enhancement grant in 2023. The total grant is \$1,714,161.96, to be spent over three years, which is in addition to the operating grant and Literacy and Resource Sharing grants that have been received annually for many years. Staff based the proposed allocations on goals defined in the VPL Strategic Plan, priorities for investment previously discussed by the VPL Board in June, and urgent community needs.

Committee members discussed the need for investment in development and training for staff and sought clarification whether the provincial grant allocation would address the inadequate training budget in the operating budget. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell responded that the grant is for three years and will support training for those years, but will not provide an ongoing budget for training that would meet the Board's goal. She noted that the BC Library partners are asking trustees to reach out to their MLA liaisons to reinforce the request for \$30M to be established as ongoing funding for libraries, and if this occurred, training could continue to have provincial support. The Committee discussed the merits of an overall training budget vs. an amount allocated to each individual staff member as a benefit.

Moved by Ziming Yang

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board approve the following allocation of funds from the Provincial Enhancement Grant:

- *Addressing urgent community needs: approx. \$500-\$650K*
- *Addressing shifting demands on staff: \$500-\$650K*
- *Planning & Evaluation: \$350-450K*
- *Inclusive Public Space: \$150-200K*

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. June 30, 2023 (Q2) Financial Operating Results

Julia Morrison, Director of Corporate Services & CFO summarized and gave an overview of the financial statement for the quarter ending June 30, 2023 noting that the library is under budget for the year by \$7K. This is due to expenditures that are lower than budget by \$404K (primarily in salaries and benefits), combined with revenues which are higher than budget by \$1.03M, offset by transfers to reserves that are higher than budget by \$1.43M. At the end of Q2, the library has spent 48.8% of its 2023 annual operating budget.

Trustees asked clarifying questions related to transfers to reserves and projections for rental and filming revenues to year-end. Staff clarified that while interest has grown in rentals, some rentable spaces are required for storage for materials being bought for Oakridge and during the Children’s Library renovation. They also noted that filming revenue was strong earlier in the year, but the Writer’s Guild of America strike has now affected filming booking. Due to these reasons, staff is anticipating that we will not meet our revenue targets by the end of the year.

Moved by Victor Huang

That the Committee recommend that the Board receive the unaudited Statement of Revenues and Expenditures for the quarter ended June 30, 2023 for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURN

Moved by Melody Ma

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:00 p.m.

Tim Bottomer, Chair

Christina de Castell, Secretary