

VPL BOARD

Inaugural Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, January 27, 2021

Minutes of the VPL Board 2021 Inaugural Meeting held on Wednesday, January 27, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via video conference.

Present:	Clr. Christine Boyle	—	Vancouver City Councillor
	Jennifer Chan	—	Chair
	Kurt Heinrich		
	Zahra Hussein		
	Rebecca Jules		
	Kevin Lowe		
	Raji Mangat	—	Vice Chair
	Stuart Mackinnon	—	Vancouver Park Board Commissioner (<i>arrived at 5:45 pm</i>)
	Harlan Pruden		
	Rhonda Sherwood	—	Vice Chair
	Karen Spears		
	Abeer Yusuf		
Absent:	Barbara Parrott	—	Vancouver School Board Trustee
Management Present:	Christina de Castell	—	Chief Librarian
	Kay Cahill	—	Director, Collections & Technology
	Julie Iannacone	—	Director, Neighbourhood & Youth Services
	Dawn Ibey	—	Director, Library Experience
	Julia Morrison	—	Director, Corporate Services & Facilities
	Carol Nelson	—	Director, Planning & Communications
	Balwinder Rai	—	Director, Human Resources
Staff:	David Waddell	—	Acting Manager, Digital Services
Guests:	Kari Scott-Whyte	—	President, CUPE Local 391
	Tristan Klassen	—	Director of Development, VPL Foundation
	Olin Anton	—	Chair, VPL Foundation
	Monika Brar	—	Co-Chair, Friends of VPL
	Darius Maze	—	Co-Chair, Friends of VPL
Recording Secretary:	Chrysalyn Tolentino	—	Executive Assistant

INAUGURAL MEETING:

Chief Librarian Christina de Castell acknowledged that our work takes place on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. She shared comments about the learning to be done and the impact of a lack of awareness on Bella Kulak's experience wearing her ribbon skirt to school. She noted the upcoming Downtown Eastside Women's Memorial March and shared that the digitized squares of the Women's Memorial March Quilt can be viewed in VPL's This Vancouver as a result of a project undertaken with community and VPL staff, and VPL is proud to have worked on this project.

1. Election of Chair

Chief Librarian Christina de Castell, acting as Chair, called the 2021 Inaugural Meeting to order at 5:35 p.m. The Chief Librarian then called for nominations for the position of Chair of the Library Board.

Moved by Rhonda Sherwood and seconded by Harlan Pruden

THAT Jennifer Chan be nominated as Chair of the VPL Board for 2021.

There being no other nominations, the Chief Librarian declared Jennifer Chan elected to the office of Chair by acclamation.

2. Election of Vice Chairs

Trustee Chan assumed the position of Chair and called for nominations for the two positions of Vice-Chair.

Moved by Rhonda Sherwood and seconded by Harlan Pruden

THAT Raji Mangat be appointed as Vice-Chair of the VPL Board for 2021.

THAT Kevin Lowe be appointed as Vice-Chair of the VPL Board for 2021.

There being no other nominations, Board Chair Chan declared Raji Mangat and Kevin Lowe elected to the office of Vice-Chair by acclamation.

3. Incoming Chair's Remarks

Board Chair Chan thanked Trustee Sherwood for her excellent work as Vice Chair last year and expressed appreciation for Trustee Sherwood's continued mentorship of other trustees, and her work with the BCLTA. Vice Chair Lowe thanked Jennifer Chan who worked tirelessly and graciously as Chair last year and expressed thanks on behalf of the Board that she has accepted this role for another year.

ADMINISTRATION

4. Consent Agenda - Removal of Items and Approval

There were no agenda items removed from consent.

Moved by Rhonda Sherwood and seconded by Kevin Lowe

THAT the following Board reports be approved on consent:

- Patron Usage Statistics report – November and December 2020
THAT the Library Board receive the report for information.
- Provisional 2021 InterLINK Budget
THAT the Library Board receive the report for information.
- BC FIPPA Compliance Report
THAT the Library Board receive the report for information.
- November 12, 2020 decision on the 2021 VPL Operating Budget
THAT the Library Board receive the report for information.
- December 9, 2020 discussion on the In Camera Agenda on the Website
THAT the Library Board receive the report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Abeer Yusuf and seconded by Raji Mangat

THAT the Board approve the regular meeting agenda as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

6. Minutes

The draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held December 9, 2020 were presented to the Board for approval.

Moved by Harlan Pruden and seconded by Rhonda Sherwood

THAT the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held December 9, 2020 be approved as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

7. Welcome to New Trustee

Board Chair Chan gave a warm welcome to new Trustee Karen Spears. She noted that Trustee Spears had participated in the new trustee orientation with the Board Chair and

the Chief Librarian, and acknowledged the valuable experiences and skills that that Trustee Spears will bring to her work as Trustee.

8. Trustee Roundtable

Board Chair Chan noted that in past years Trustees have started the year with a brief round table to share information about themselves. Last year, Trustees shared their motivations for volunteering at the Library. This year, Board Chair Chan asked trustees if they could share with each other an aspect of their experiences or skills that they plan to bring to their role as trustees and volunteers on the VPL Board.

Vice Chair Raji Mangat thanked everyone for allowing her to serve as Vice Chair again this year. Raji has experience in policy work and analysis, and bringing an equity lens from her background as a lawyer in the non-profit sector. She also brings her sense of humor.

Vice Chair Kevin Lowe has background in public policy and an interest in the role of public institutions in intersectionality, diversity and determinants of health.

Trustee Sherwood brings thirty years of experience in the male-dominated financial industry, a focus on ethics, and experience mentoring women.

Trustee Yusuf expressed her gratitude to Board Chair Chan, and Vice Chairs Mangat and Lowe for taking on their roles. Trustee Yusuf brings experience in youth engagement, media, journalism, and grants and interest in laughing and bringing joy. She is also interested in equity, intersectionality and the Land Back Movement.

Trustee Jules is Secwépemc from Adams Lake in BC and has been a guest within the unceded traditional territories of the Coast Salish peoples for many years. She brings experience in public policy, proposals, fundraising, frontline work with Indigenous youth and families, general community work, and as a parent. She has a background in education, peer mentorship, rights education, culture, and experience using the library as an entrepreneur.

Trustee Heinrich has a background in reputational management and communications and he is looking forward to bringing this experience and expertise to the Board.

Trustee Pruden shared his Indigenous name and its connection to his intentions. He shared his belief in the library as an amazing equalizer and his deep appreciation and love for VPL. He has served on several boards, and he brings attentiveness to Indigenous communities and Truth and Reconciliation, and ensuring that Indigenous communities have a voice. He has experience in public health policy, taking a JEDI (justice, equity, diversity, inclusion) lens and ensuring that the library gives equal access to everyone.

Trustee Hussein shared that she works at Child Health BC and has a background in

facilitating change by bringing groups together, social determinants of health, strategic planning and evaluation. She shared that she completed her MBA in December.

<Vice Chair Mangat left the meeting at 6:16 p.m.>

Trustee Spears thanked the Board for their fabulous welcome, thanked Trustee Sherwood for being her board buddy and thanked Board Chair Chan and the Chief Librarian for the orientation. Trustee Spears has worked as an advocate in the DTES and on poverty issues and brings experience from her related roles with the provincial government. She is known among her friends to be obsessed with the library.

Trustee Mackinnon is a Vancouver Park Board Commissioner and the liaison to VPL. He comes with lots of years' experience in boards and local government.

Clr. Christine Boyle has been the Council liaison to VPL for the past two years and shared that she will be stepping down from the role due to other commitments, and Council will be appointing her replacement. She has learned a lot seeing the way the Board works and will continue to advocate for the library. She thanked fellow trustees, staff, the Friends of VPL and VPL Foundation.

Board Chair Chan brings perspective from being on the Board for eight years and expressed her commitment to ensuring that everyone on the Board has the information, resources and support they need to step up into leadership roles. She noted that she is lawyer and in that role has had the opportunity to learn from people with many different points of view, having respectful dialogue and working with teams.

<Clr. Christine Boyle left the meeting at 6:20 p.m.>

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

➤ CUPE Local 391

Kari Scott-Whyte, President of CUPE 391, shared that staff had a really challenging year last year due to the pandemic, that she is continually impressed at the level of engagement of the Board, and that she is looking forward to the year ahead. The Union will meet tomorrow evening to approve their budget and she is really pleased that they did well last year due to good financial guidance from their treasurer. The Union has room and capacity now to deal again with pre-pandemic concerns and more regular labour relations issues. The Joint Occupational Safety Committee continues to work hard and remains to be a strong force for the membership. The Union's priority for 2021 is the mental and emotional support for members and provincial campaigns for CUPE BC. Trustee Sherwood acknowledged the work Kari has done in 2020 which brought real understanding for the Board on what VPL staff were undergoing. Board Chair Chan echoed how valuable it is to hear directly from Kari on the challenges that staff faces and bringing awareness of staffs' experiences.

➤ **Friends of VPL**

Monika Brar, Co-Chair of Friends of VPL, shared that their board is continuing to work on: their strategic plan, the onboarding of their new general manager who was previously the Book'mark manager, the business plan for the bookstore, the membership structure, policy reviews, and operational risk analysis. They are also working on seeking a storage solution for their books and sorting. She added that there are no plans to conduct a book sale this year due to the pandemic. Their AGM will be held in the next few months and they hope to fill three vacancies on the board. Darius Maze, Co-Chair of the Friends of VPL, was happy to report that their fundraising appeal brought in \$15,000 in donations. He noted that the board appreciated having had Trustee Lowe as the Library Board liaison to the Friends in the past year and is pleased to have a strong relationship with the Library Board. Trustee Pruden asked about the status of the "Stay at Home and Read a Book Ball". Darius responded that the campaign did not go forward last year and they conducted a direct appeal to donors instead.

➤ **VPL Foundation**

Tristan Klassen, Director of Development recognized the attendance of Olin Anton, VPL Foundation Board Chair, and shared that it is a busy time in the Foundation due to the success of the VPL cardholder campaign which resulted in receiving donations to-date worth over \$139,000 coming from 1,396 donors. The Foundation is happy with the outcome and has received wonderful feedback from donors.

ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND INFORMATION

9. COVID-19 Update

Chief Librarian de Castell provided the following updates:

- VPL is gradually adding hours and is now at nearly 70% of regular hours. Staff are working to return to full service hours by early April 2021 and are lifting cohort restrictions to enable this, which were put in place before the provincial mask mandate, and hiring to fill vacant shifts
- VPL returned to regular loan period and charges at the beginning of the year, and will be resuming charges for photocopying and printing effective February 1, 2021.
- Limited seating is resuming in some branches and at Central Library, along with restored newspaper use. Public service managers are planning for resuming other activities we stopped due to the pandemic e.g. instrument lending.
- Circulation is steadily going upward and digital circulation remains very strong.
- Staff continue to develop new digital programming for children and adults
- Capital redevelopment planning has resumed: for the West End/Joe Fortes branch redevelopment, for Marpole where staff are re-engaging with Musqueam

Nation, for a potential Joyce Collingwood location, and for the new Oakridge branch. The feasibility study for the Children's Library revitalization, funded by the VPL Foundation, is concluding.

- Eight digital interns have started and VPL has begun to offer anti-racism training to staff.
- She expressed thanks to the Library Board for supporting the first fundraising campaign to cardholders and the VPL Foundation for reaching out to all the donors.

Trustee Mackinnon gave kudos to Firehall branch staff for their excellent work and for being friendly and helpful to patrons.

Trustee Yusuf appreciated hearing of the anti-racism training for staff and asked who provided the training. Chief Librarian de Castell responded that VPL engaged Cicely Blaine for the anti-racism workshops. Trustee Yusuf thanked Mt. Pleasant branch staff for doing a great job and being helpful, and gave kudos to Marketing & Communication staff for a recent meme and their social media approach.

Trustee Hussein gave kudos to staff for developing digital programming and noted that she had participated in a number of online workshops.

Board Chair Chan noted that it is heartening to hear that safety protocols are working and sought clarification on the date when full hours are anticipated and budget. Chief Librarian de Castell noted that management will need to fill the vacant positions before VPL can open on Sundays, and this is anticipated in early April 2021. She confirmed that VPL has adequate budget for full hours starting in April.

Trustee Pruden asked about discussion on increasing diversity among staff and management. Chief Librarian de Castell noted that staff are looking for opportunities to apply learnings from digital intern hiring aimed at equity seeking groups to broaden the applicant pool, and recognized the need to change the face of librarianship broadly. Trustees Pruden and Heinrich asked about opportunities to communicate with library schools. Chief Librarian de Castell shared comments about the need for attention at multiple levels of education and nationally. She suggested that staff plan for a robust discussion of this issue at the Community Relations, Planning & Development Committee and Committee Chair Heinrich agreed.

10. Intellectual Freedom Challenges 2020

Kay Cahill, Director of Collections & Technology, provided an overview of the report including a list of challenges to materials, library programs, and rentals in 2020. She noted that VPL is committed to intellectual freedom and freedom of expression and this is one of the core values of libraries. Vice Chair Lowe asked about practices for removal of books and

whether comprehensive review of collections had taken place. Director Cahill replied that it is very rare that staff remove an item based on a complaint but sometimes staff move the material to another area. Chief Librarian de Castell provided examples of past review activities for Indigenous collections and establishing criteria for inclusion in those collections. Board Chair Chan noted appreciation for staff expanding the commentary in the Indigenous consideration section of the report as requested by the Board.

Moved by Rhonda Sherwood and seconded by Abeer Yusuf

THAT the Board receive the report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

<Vice Chair Mangat returned to the meeting at 7:15 p.m.>

11. Briefing on Library Associations and Library Bodies

Chief Librarian de Castell noted that Board Self Evaluation surveys had identified that some Trustees wanted to become more familiar with library associations and organizations and how they connect with VPL. She provided examples of how VPL and library staff interact with each of the associations or organizations, and some of the key roles of each body. Trustee Yusuf asked for clarification regarding Trustee membership to these associations. Chief Librarian de Castell replied that Trustees are members of BCLTA through their roles, and they could optionally join BCLA if they wished to. VPL belongs to CULC, BCLA and IFLA as an institutional member, and the BCLA membership incorporates CFLA. Board Chair Chan referred Trustees to the resources and workshops offered by BCLTA, and thanked Trustees Sherwood and Pruden for being capable Library Board representatives to the BCLTA and Public Library InterLINK Boards.

Moved by Zahra Hussein and seconded by Kurt Heinrich

THAT the Board receive the report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

<Trustee Stuart Mackinnon left the meeting at 7:20 p.m.>

12. Committee and Liaison Roles

Board Chair Chan was pleased to announce the following Committee Chair and liaison appointments:

Harlan Pruden – Governance Committee Chair and member of the BCLTA Board

Kurt Heinrich – CRPD Committee Chair & Board liaison to the VPL Foundation

Zahra Hussein – SFHR Committee Chair

Board Chair Chan thanked Trustee Sherwood for her leadership as Chair of Services, Finance & Human Resources and noted that she will be mentoring Trustee Hussein in this role and will continue as a member of the BCLTA Board together with Trustee Pruden. Board Chair Chan will be reaching out to Trustees to enquire which committee they prefer and for interest in liaison roles to the Public Library InterLINK, VPL Trust, Friends of VPL, City Council and MLAs. She also noted Trustees are welcome to join all Governance Committee meetings. Trustee Yusuf asked about branch liaison roles, and Chief Librarian de Castell noted that the Governance Committee agreed to dissolve the branch liaison concept in favour of moving to sharing significant event invitations with all Trustees so that the invitations reach the broader group and each person can identify what they would like to attend.

13. Confirming Completion of Annual Chief Librarian Performance Review

Board Chair Chan reported that part of the responsibility of the Board is to conduct the Chief Librarian's performance review and noted that the review was completed by a committee of Trustees Lowe, Mangat, Sherwood and herself. She thanked Trustees for completing the performance review survey.

ADJOURN

Moved by Harlan Pruden and seconded by Abeer Yusuf

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:34 p.m.

Jennifer Chan, Chair

Christina de Castell, Secretary