



Minutes of the VPL Board Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, September 23, 2020 at 5:30 p.m. via video conference.

<b>Present:</b>	Clr. Christine Boyle	—	Vancouver City Councillor
	Jennifer Chan	—	Chair
	Kurt Heinrich		
	Zahra Hussein		
	Rebecca Jules		
	Kevin Lowe		
	Stuart Mackinnon	—	Vancouver Park Board Commissioner
	Raji Mangat	—	Vice Chair
	Harlan Pruden		
	John Schaub		
	Rhonda Sherwood	—	Vice Chair
<b>Absent:</b>	Barbara Parrott	—	Vancouver School Board Trustee
	Abeer Yusuf		
<b>Management</b>			
<b>Present:</b>	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
<b>Staff:</b>	Maryn Ashdown	—	Assoc. Director, Neighbourhood & Youth Services
	Jennifer Lee	—	Acting Manager, Circulation Services
<b>Guests:</b>	Kari Scott-Whyte	—	President, CUPE Local 391
	Jenny Marsh	—	Executive Director, VPL Foundation
	Monika Brar	—	Co-Chair, Friends of VPL
	Karen Ranalleta	—	President, CUPE 2950
<b>Recording</b>			
<b>Secretary:</b>	Chrysalyn Tolentino	—	Executive Assistant

## INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Board Chair Chan acknowledged that our work takes place on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. She observed that it is with a lot of gratitude that we are able to live and work in these unceded lands, and that it is important to acknowledge the impacts that our presence has had on Indigenous peoples and the harms that have been caused, including through residential schools that systematically undermined Indigenous cultures and languages. She noted that Orange Shirt Day on September 30 is a time set aside to recommit to reconciliation to begin to address those wrongs. Board Chair Chan thanked VPL for being part of this conversation through the release of related reading lists. She also noted that BCLTA will hold its Annual General Meeting on October 6 and thanked Trustee Sherwood for her dedication and work as representative for VPL. She shared that Trustee Sherwood is completing her term on the BCLTA Board and asked for trustees' support for Trustee Pruden as a nominee. She noted that a majority of branches are now open to the public and thanked staff for their efforts, as well as the leadership of CUPE 391 for working collaboratively with the Library. Board Chair Chan also welcomed Karen Ranalleta from CUPE 2950, and recognized her as a strong library supporter.

## ADMINISTRATION

### 1. Consent Agenda - Removal of Items and Approval

Moved by Zahra Hussein and seconded by Kurt Heinrich

*THAT the Board approve the regular meeting agenda as received.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### 2. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Rebecca Jules and seconded by Zahra Hussein

*THAT the Board approve the regular meeting agenda as received.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### 3. Minutes

The draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held July 22, 2020 were presented to the Board for approval.

Moved by Raji Mangat and seconded by Zahra Hussein

*THAT the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held July 22, 2020 be approved as received.*

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION**

➤ **CUPE Local 391**

Kari Scott-Whyte, President of CUPE 391, thanked the Board Chair for recognizing the members and acknowledged that open communication is key in working through this pandemic. She is very happy to see staff coming back to work. The Union continues discussions around filling vacancies, and noted that health and safety has been well addressed by the OH&S joint committee. She also acknowledged the facilities and maintenance staff who worked exceptionally hard to preparing locations for opening. The Union will continue to hold bi-weekly video meetings with staff until the end of December. She noted that CUPE 391, 15 and 1004 met with Mayor Stewart recently. Trustee Sherwood asked about staff stress related to returning to work and thanked Kari for updating the Board.

➤ **Friends of VPL**

Monika Brar, Co-Chair of Friends of VPL, reported that they conducted their annual general meeting in June. She shared that the Book'mark store has opened five days a week but foot traffic is slow, and that the Board is recruiting for the treasurer position. The Board will hold their annual planning meeting and review their five-year plan in October. She also shared that the Friends will post an anti-racism statement in their newsletter. Monika is seeking suggestions on activities for their annual volunteer appreciation day in early 2021. Board Chair Chan congratulated Monika in her new role as Co-Chair and shared that she visited Book'mark and felt safe with the measures in place.

➤ **VPL Foundation**

Jenny Marsh, Executive Director, reported that the VPL Foundation's Expanding Digital Library initiative raised over \$90,000 for the Library's eBook and digital collections. In October, the VPL Foundation will host a virtual book club with authors and will conduct a stewardship event for major donors. They will be sending out their annual appeal in the fall. Jenny noted that the Foundation's annual audit is complete and thanked Julia Morrison for facilitating this. She also shared Board and staff updates.

**ITEM FOR DECISION**

**4. Emergency Response Policy**

Rhonda Sherwood, SFHR Committee Chair, introduced the report and policy, and noted that the draft policy was discussed at the Committee in July where edits were suggested, and the updated policy was brought back to Committee in September and further

discussed. The policy identifies the delegation of authority to the Chief Librarian and provides direction for timely and appropriate decision-making during emergencies.

Moved by John Schaub and seconded by Harlan Pruden

*THAT the Board approve the Emergency Response Policy.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

**5. 2021 New Investment Request for Expansion of Fine-Free Services**

Rhonda Sherwood, SFHR Committee Chair, introduced the report, observing the support of the Committee for the recommendation and that the Committee recognized removing overdue fines would remove a significant barrier faced by people who really need the library and its services. She noted that the SFHR Committee identified the recommendation will support the library's goals to reduce social isolation and provide affordable access. Trustee Heinrich asked about the role of the Board in advocating for this change, and the Chief Librarian responded that staff will provide information to support trustees' conversations with City Council members prior to the budget deliberations. Trustee Heinrich also acknowledged the strong story in the report and how effective it is to demonstrate the need for fine free service. Trustees sought clarification on impacts of the change at other libraries, and the difference between overdue and lost items.

Board Chair Chan asked about the role of the Board if the investment is approved by Council. The Chief Librarian responded that the Board would be asked to approve the Library's 2021 budget after Council, and that the setting of fines has been delegated to the Chief Librarian. An information report would be provided about implementation of fine-free service and the complementary VPL Foundation campaign suggested by SFHR. Director Ibey noted that there would also be a one-year evaluation that will be brought to the Board. Trustee Pruden noted that the Library does not gather demographic data on cards and therefore does not know if the neighbourhood with higher Indigenous and black communities are the groups with blocked cards. He asked that staff provide a more nuanced explanation. The Chief Librarian confirmed that patron demographic data is not gathered, and that the relationship is correlative, and that staff will include this in Q&A for the initiative and amend the report to clarify.

Moved by Raji Mangat and seconded by Harlan Pruden

*THAT the Board direct staff to submit a proposal to the City of Vancouver for \$625,000 as a new investment request in the 2021 budget process in order to expand the library's fine free services to all patrons for overdue materials.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## 6. Board Policy Rescissions

CRPD Committee Chair Kurt Heinrich noted that each Board committee had reviewed and recommended the policies within their mandate for rescission.

Moved by Clr. Christine Boyle and seconded by Harlan Pruden

*THAT the Board approve the rescission of the following policies:*

- *Bottled Water in Library Facilities;*
- *Community Engagement Values Statement;*
- *Customer Service Statement;*
- *Posters and Newspapers;*
- *Records Management;*
- *Bed Bug;*
- *Technology & Public Service; and*
- *In-Camera policy.*

**CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## ITEM FOR INFORMATION

### 7. COVID-19 Update

The Chief Librarian shared that Dunbar, Firehall and Hasting branches reopened with limited services on September 22 and Collingwood, Frasersview, Joe Fortes and Kensington branches will reopen on September 29, while Carnegie branch will deliver limited services out of the Carnegie theatre. Oakridge will open a book drop and remains closed due to development at the site; staff is seeking an alternative location. She commented that it has been great to see staff coming back to work; that it has been challenging for everyone, but ultimately successful, and patrons have expressed their appreciation. She noted Accessible Services has restarted delivering materials to care facilities and home bound patrons, and the next step will be working on expanding hours on Sundays and Mondays. In the first couple of months, foot traffic has been 20-30% of the same period in 2019, computer use is at 90% of availability, and book circulation is at about 40% of 2019 levels. She also noted that VPL is limiting part time and auxiliary staff to working across 3 locations to manage exposure and closure risks. She shared updates about services and programs, and continuing efforts to improve circumstances for remote work.

Clr. Boyle asked if the library is seeing higher than usual use of washrooms within its premises. Christina responded that this data is not normally tracked but she will ask branches to share comments. Trustee Lowe noted the significant digital divide in society and asked if we should consider expanding computers moving forward. Christina responded that normally we provide about 500 public computers and this meets need, but

every location reduced by about 50% due to COVID distancing requirements. When we are able to open additional floors in Central we will be able to make many more computers available. It would be more difficult to increase computers in branches due to additional infrastructure work required. We will be looking at other options such as the use of laptops and tablets to allow for flexibility, however, this is challenging currently due to the global demand for these items. Trustee Pruden asked about tracking WiFi usage, and Christina noted that we are currently not allowing seating inside branches, so WiFi use will be low relative to public computer use. Director Cahill added that we have moved WiFi access points to support outdoor use where this is possible.

## **ADJOURN**

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:37 p.m.

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Jennifer Chan, Chair

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Christina de Castell, Secretary