

MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: January 13, 2016
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Meeting Date: January 20, 2016
TO: Library Board
FROM: Chief Librarian
SUBJECT: CLA Special Meeting, January 27, 2016

SUMMARY

This report provides background on the imminent CLA Special Meeting on January 27, 2016 and a recommendation regarding utilising the VPL Board's voting right as an Associate member of CLA.

PURPOSE

This report is for decision.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board name Beth Davies as VPL Board's Associate membership voting representative at the CLA Special General Meeting to be held at the Ontario Library Associations (OLA) Super Conference on January 27, 2016; and

That the voting representative be directed to vote in favour of the resolution and in a manner that is aligned with this direction on any matters arising at the meeting.

POLICY

There is no applicable policy.

CHIEF LIBRARIAN COMMENTS

The Chief Librarian currently serves as the President of the Canadian Library Association.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

Given the broad range of national and international issues that impact libraries and information rights in Canada, it is critical that libraries have a strong and effective national voice.

The upcoming Special Meeting of CLA has been called to contemplate the dissolution of the Association in order to create a new national federation of library associations. This is the most significant consideration of members since the association was created 69 years ago.

BACKGROUND

The Canadian Library Association (CLA)/Association canadienne des bibliothèques (ACB) is a national, not-for-profit, voluntary organization, representing institutional, associate, corporate, and personal members from the school, public, academic, and special libraries' sectors, from across and outside of Canada. CLA has served as a national voice for libraries on a diverse set of library and information-related policy issues for the past 69 years. It has gained recognition from the federal government, as well as international library organizations, as the representative of Canadian libraries.

As CLA is the national voice for Canadian library communities, its members currently:

- champion library values and the value of libraries
- influence public policy impacting libraries
- inspire and support member learning
- collaborate to strengthen the library community

For many years, CLA's raison d'être has been in question. Declining membership and other factors such as growing regional, provincial, and sector-specific national associations with competing membership drives, have significantly diminished CLA's position as the voice of a unified Canadian library community.

Despite several attempts to adjust CLA's focus and activities over the past 15 years, it has become evident that restructuring is required. Membership has declined significantly resulting in a national association that represents a small fraction of the broader library community and insufficient funds to operate as a national association and to meet its mandate. Further, significant cynicism arising from many past failed attempts to restructure has grown in the library community across Canada and meets most new initiatives undertaken by CLA to strengthen itself.

Since early 2015, work was undertaken by library sector leaders, including representatives from provincial, territorial, and national sector associations, to develop a new structure for Canada's national library voice. A proposed federated model has been developed to replace CLA as the

national voice – an “association of associations”, to be called the Canadian Federation of Library Associations / Fédération canadienne des associations de bibliothèques (CFLA/FCAB).

The proposal seeks to leverage the membership strengths of the many library associations in Canada, with a view to: 1) reinforcing collaboration between associations; and 2) creating opportunities for a unified and coordinated national voice for the library community.

The CLA has presented a resolution to dissolve, with the intent to redistribute transferable resources to a new federation of library associations as per the proposal noted above. This matter will be considered at a Special Meeting of CLA members held during the upcoming OLA Super Conference in January 2016.

DISCUSSION

The VPL has two memberships in CLA. The institutional membership vote is carried by the Chief Librarian as the executive officer of the library. The VPL Board also has an Associate membership in CLA and must determine how it will vote on the matter and who will carry the vote to the special meeting on behalf of the Board. In the past, VPL staff have not proceeded with seeking representation from the VPL Board for its Associate membership on matters coming before the CLA membership because the matters being discussed have not been controversial or as significant as the upcoming business items.

The current matter is of great importance to the Library community and so it is likewise important the VPL Board exercise its right to vote as an Associate member.

The full proposal being considered by members is attached to this cover report. The resolution being considered by the membership is:

DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION

BE IT RESOLVED as a special resolution that:

1. the Board of Directors is hereby authorized to cause the Corporation to distribute any money or other property in accordance with sections 234 to 236 of the Canada Not-for-profit-Corporations Act (the “Act”) and to discharge any liabilities of the Corporation;
2. the dissolution of the Corporation is hereby authorized pursuant to subsection 220(3) of the Act;
3. for the purpose of bringing such dissolution into effect, the Corporation shall send articles of dissolution in the prescribed form to the Director appointed under the Act; and
4. any director or officer of the Corporation is hereby authorized and directed to execute and deliver all such documents and to do all such other acts and things as

such director or officer may determine to be necessary or advisable in connection with such dissolution, the execution of any such document or the doing of any such other act or thing being conclusive evidence of such determination.

VPL will have two people at the Special Meeting. As the Chief Librarian is the Chair of the Special Meeting, it is inappropriate for her to serve as the Board's representative. Accordingly, the Chief Librarian recommends that Manager Beth Davies, who will be attending CLA and who will be carrying the VPL institutional vote, be assigned as the Board's representative and that the delegation entitle her to speak and vote on matters arising at this meeting.

Staff recommend that the VPL Board direct the representative to vote in favour of the motion and in an aligned manner on any other matters that arise during the meeting,

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

VPL currently pays approximately \$5,300 a year for its two CLA memberships. It is anticipated that the amount VPL will contribute to the Federation's national endeavours through its memberships in CULC and BCLA will be approximately \$3,300.

TIMELINES

If the CLA membership votes in favour of the resolution, then dissolution activities will begin. If the membership votes against the matter, then activities will be immediately initiated with regards to an election for a new Board.

FINAL REMARKS

The upcoming CLA Special Meeting represents the culmination of over a year's effort by and significant collaboration between library associations across Canada. The proposal is not perfect and there are still many details for the future Federation board to contemplate should it proceed. However, it represents a necessary change for the Canadian library community and hopefully one that will see a re-energized national association with truly national engagement.