
Minutes of the VPL Board Community Relations, Planning & Development Committee Regular Meeting held on Monday, March 15, 2021 at 5:30 p.m. via conference call.

Present: Jennifer Chan
Kurt Heinrich – Chair
Rebecca Jules
Raji Mangat
Harlan Pruden

Absent: Abeer Yusuf

Management

Present: Christina de Castell – Chief Librarian
Julie Iannacone – Director, Neighbourhood & Youth Services
Dawn Ibey – Director, Library Experience
Carol Nelson – Director, Planning & Communications

Guest: Kari Scott-Whyte – President, CUPE 391
Nikta Bayanpour – Manager, Accounting Services
Megan Langley – Manager, Neighbourhood Services

Recording

Secretary: Chrysalyn Tolentino – Executive Assistant

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Committee Chair Heinrich acknowledged that our work takes place on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations and expressed appreciation for the opportunity to do our work on these beautiful lands.

ADMINISTRATION:

1. Approval of the Agenda

Moved by Jennifer Chan

THAT the Committee approve the regular meeting agenda as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Minutes

The Chief Librarian presented the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting February 16, 2021 for approval by the Committee.

Moved by Raji Mangat

THAT the draft minutes of Regular Meeting held February 16, 2021 be approved as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

COMMUNITY RELATIONS

3. 2019-2020 Actions to address the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Recommendations

Megan Langley, who is the manager leading VPL's response to Truth & Reconciliation provided a summary of VPL's 2019-2020 activities to address the Calls to Action. Board Chair Chan asked what units participate in Reconciliation work. Megan responded that VPL's Reconciliation Working Group is composed of staff from across the organization. Vice Chair Mangat asked how VPL's work is connected to the City of Vancouver's decision to implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Chief Librarian de Castell noted that she has started this discussion with the City, and will make a formal inquiry to the joint working group to learn how the library may connect with the work.

Trustee Pruden noted the need for connection to the specific Truth & Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and asked that a clear definition of how the word "decolonize" is being used by VPL be included in the report. He shared the meaning of "decolonization" as looking at relationships and addressing power imbalances that have arisen from the historical use of power in colonial systems, and noted that art does not fulfill this purpose. Chief Librarian de Castell noted that the original VPL strategy was guided by the CFLA Committee formed to examine the Calls to Action for application in libraries, and VPL used those recommendations for the plan. She confirmed that staff will check the CFLA report for a definition of "decolonization" and add this and references to the Calls to Action before the report goes to the Board.

Board Chair Chan asked about how VPL measures success in these areas. Chief Librarian de Castell noted that while attendance is measured at programs, as noted in the report, we have not generally gathered demographics for program attendees for privacy reasons, and in this area success is measured by building and maintaining relationships. She noted that the community coming to VPL to seek the creation of the Kith and Kin program is an indication of success in this work, as it showed that VPL had built trust with those Indigenous organizations.

Committee Chair Heinrich asked about the biggest challenges in the past and looking forward related to this work. Chief Librarian de Castell responded that going forward, the biggest challenge will be learning how to engage with the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations as each Nation is different, and coordinating this with the City's Intergovernmental Relations department. Megan noted that an ongoing challenge has been not having

Indigenous staff in leadership roles and shared information about the work on Indigenous youth internships, which had been initiated prior to COVID.

Trustee Pruden reflected that VPL has done some amazing work on TRC including on a governance level, noting the inclusion of a section of Indigenous considerations in policies, and having two Indigenous Trustees appointed to the Library Board. Trustee Jules recognized the work VPL has done, and noted the importance of acknowledging resourcing in the work, as ongoing funding for internships, staffing, and programming is necessary to create real change. She expanded on decolonization as an effort to address structural biases and bring forward Indigenous knowledge. Trustee Jules shared that she is grateful to be on the Library Board and looking forward to seeing all the great work that the Library will do in the future. Chief Librarian de Castell thanked Megan Langley for her leadership in this area for the past seven years. Board Chair Chan echoed her appreciation for Megan's important work.

Moved by Rebecca Jules

THAT the Committee receive the report for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PLANNING

4. 2020-2023 Operating Plan

Carol Nelson, Director of Planning & Communications, presented the VPL 2020-2023 Operating Plan that provides an overview of the strategies, initiatives and activities to be implemented in order to achieve the 13 goals outlined in the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan, including how the goals will influence VPL's daily operations. The next steps will include determining how VPL will measure success, and developing a proposed approach to progress reporting for the Board, including formats and frequency. Board Chair Chan noted the value of the report for trustees, provided some suggestions and clarifications, and asked about using this document when liaising with Council. Chief Librarian de Castell clarified that the Strategic Plan should be used as a handout, while the Operating Plan can be used as talking points but should not be distributed, as its audience is the Board and staff. Vice Chair Mangat thanked Carol and her team for the plan and shared appreciation for its concise content and its value for trustees. Trustee Pruden suggested "historically marginalized audiences" as an alternative to "diverse audiences" in goal 4.2.

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

Moved by Raji Mangat

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

Chief Librarian de Castell thanked all the directors and manager leads for working on this new approach, noting the significant change from the prior plan, and how it has achieved greater clarity around intention and plans for each goal. Board Chair Chan thanked Carol Nelson and her team for creating a beautiful Operating Plan.

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 6:34 p.m.

Kurt Heinrich, Chair

Christina de Castell, Secretary

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