



Minutes of the VPL Board Services, Finance & Human Resources Committee Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, September 16, 2020 at 6:31 p.m. via Zoom video call.

Present: Jennifer Chan
Zahra Hussein
Raji Mangat
John Schaub
Rhonda Sherwood — SFHR Committee Chair

Management

Present: Christina de Castell — Chief Librarian
Julie Iannacone — Director, Neighbourhood & Youth Services
Dawn Ibey — Director, Library Experience
Julia Morrison — Director, Corporate Service & Facilities
Carol Nelson — Director, Planning & Communications

Guests: Kari Scott-Whyte — President, CUPE 391
Jennifer Lee — Acting Manager, Circulation Services

Recording

Secretary: Chrysalyn Tolentino — Executive Assistant

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Committee Chair Sherwood 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 and Additions to the Agenda

Moved by Zahra Hussein

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 held July 15, 2020 for approval by the Committee.

Moved by Raji Mangat

THAT the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held July 15, 2020 be approved as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

SERVICES

3. 2021 New Investment Request for Expansion of Fine-Free Services

Dawn Ibey, Director of Library Experience, introduced Jennifer Lee, Acting Manager of Circulation Services, who led the analysis for this report as part of her participation in a library leadership program. Dawn noted that this report brings forward a recommendation for a new investment funding request for the expansion of fine free services as part of the 2021 budget process, following up on the Board's request in November 2019 to explore this action as part of our goal to reduce social isolation and provide affordable access.

Dawn reported that analysis of cardholders who have lost their borrowing privileges due to fines shows identifiable equity issues. Vancouver has a higher concentration of people who have lost their borrowing privileges in neighbourhoods with lower median incomes, and in most neighbourhoods where a greater proportion of residents are Indigenous or Black, noting the Strathcona and Grandview Woodlands neighbourhoods. She identified that an investment of \$625,000 by the City to VPL's annual operating budget would be required to eliminate overdue fines, and this could be phased in over 2 years. Trustees Schaub, Hussein, and Mangat expressed their strong support for the recommendation.

Committee Chair Sherwood and Board Chair Chan inquired about options for those who are able to pay their fines, or graduated systems, and staff provided information about the range of approaches of this nature that VPL has implemented including, fine free children's borrowing and the Access Card, that have been unable to achieve the desired broad effect of returning blocked users to the library and changing the perception of the library as a punitive organization. Staff suggested working with the VPL Foundation to design a campaign for donations that could complement the introduction of fine free service and provide an opportunity for those with means to support the library. Trustee Mangat expressed concern about potential tiered service models and favoured a uniform approach. Committee Chair Sherwood noted her support of working with the VPL Foundation on a communication strategy to support donations.

Board Chair Chan asked staff to prepare material to answer questions about the benefit of prioritizing fine free over other changes that would improve access and equity such as extending hours, and also potential concerns about expensive materials. Dawn noted that discussion with other libraries and VPL's previous experience support the conclusion that

fines are the single biggest barrier to equitable library access. The Chief Librarian added that elimination of overdue fines does not remove the replacement cost of overdue/lost materials and patrons who do not return materials would still be charged the replacement cost. Trustee Hussein noted from her work in public health the importance of social determinants of health and her support of this people-centred approach. After further discussion and expressions of support from trustees, the following motion was raised:

Moved by Raji Mangat

THAT the Services, Finances, and Human Resources Committee recommend 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

POLICIES

4. Updated Draft Emergency Response Policy

Carol Nelson, Director of Planning & Communications, presented the draft Emergency Response Policy intended to delegate authority and provide direction for a timely and appropriate decision-making during emergencies. This iteration included the feedback received from the Committee in July 2020.

Moved by Zahra Hussein

THAT the Services, Finance and Human Resources Committee recommend that the Board approve the Emergency Response Policy.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Board Policy Rescissions

Carol Nelson, Director of Planning & Communications, presented a report seeking Committee approval to rescind two policies that are operational and are replaced by administrative policies or staff training.

Moved by Raji Mangat

THAT the Services, Finance & Human Resources Committee recommend that the Board approve the rescission of the following policies:

- *Bed Bug*
- *Technology & Public Service*

FINANCIALS

6. Review of Audits and Evaluations

Julia Morrison, Director of Corporate Services & Facilities, summarized the report and shared information about the external and internal audits and examinations that are conducted in relation to the Library's finances and operations. Chief Librarian de Castell noted that we request audits for areas we identify as risks, including periodic audits of our acquisitions processes due to the amount of funds spent on materials acquisition. Board Chair Chan asked about strategies that protect VPL from reputational risk around spending. Julia responded that the our procurement policy mitigates risks by ensuring there is oversight on all purchases made, and she personally reviews and signs off on all expense reports and credit card statements before they are paid. Trustee Mangat sought clarification around oversight related to the content of material and compliance with policy and law.

Moved by Raji Mangat

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

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURN

There being no further business, the Chair declared the Regular meeting adjourned at 7:24 p.m.

Rhonda Sherwood, Chair

Christina de Castell, Secretary