
Minutes of the VPL Board Services, Finance & Human Resources Committee Regular Meeting held on Wednesday, March 15, 2023 at 5:30 p.m. via Zoom video call.

Present: Tim Bottomer — Chair
Victor Huang
Kevin Lowe
Melody Ma
Ziming Yang

Management

Present: Christina de Castell — Chief Librarian & CEO
Kay Cahill — Director, Information Technology & Collections
Dawn Ibey — Director, Central Library & Public Service
Jennifer Lee — Acting Director, Neighbourhood & Youth Services
Julia Morrison — Director, Corporate Services & CFO
Carol Nelson — Director, Planning & Communications
Balwinder Rai — Director, Human Resources

Staff: Johnathan Dyer — Acting President, CUPE 391

Recording

Secretary: Chrysalyn Tolentino — Executive Assistant

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

Committee Chair Bottomer acknowledged that our work takes place on the unceded homelands of the Musqueam, Squamish and Tsleil-Waututh Nations. He shared that one of his book club books is a post-apocalyptic novel entitled *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice, set in an Anishinaabe First Nations reserve in northern Ontario. The author said in an interview that every Indigenous novel is a post-apocalyptic novel, recognizing the lived reality of these communities who have experienced 70-90% death rates from pandemics, alien arrival, mass migration and uprooting of culture, and Trustee Bottomer reflected that this is a powerful lens to think through.

ADMINISTRATION:**1. Approval and Additions to the Agenda**

Moved by Kevin Lowe

THAT the Committee approve the regular meeting agenda as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

2. Minutes

The Chief Librarian & CEO presented the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held February 15, 2023 for approval by the Committee.

Moved by Melody Ma

THAT the draft minutes of the Regular Meeting held February 15, 2023 be approved as received.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

FINANCIALS

3. 2023 Operating Budget

Julia Morrison, Director of Corporate Services & CFO, presented the 2023 Operating Budget that was approved by City Council on February 28, 2023. The approved Council budget provides \$113K of ongoing funding for a new regular full-time position to provide training and staff skills in crisis prevention, intervention, harassment, and mental health related areas, and \$100K of ongoing funding to convert existing branch materials handling positions to public service positions and training. The total VPL budget for 2023 is \$58,868,739.

Trustee Ma asked why the new funding was shown under other instead of under salaries and benefits. Director Morrison responded that she places new investments under special projects until we have the job description written and finalized through compensation and benefits, and she knows how much is salaries, vs. fringe benefits etc. She will move the values to the correct cost centres once these are confirmed.

Board Chair Lowe referred to the table detailing the total municipal revenue which shows a 2.8% increase. He asked what is included beyond the new investments approved and expressed concern that the report does not breakdown the other increases. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell noted that the increase of close to 2% is because of fixed cost increases, which were detailed in the November Board report and include utility increases, leases, etc. Board Chair Lowe requested that staff add a reference to the November report and the fixed cost increases in the Committee Discussion section of the final report.

Trustee Huang agreed that this addition would be helpful. He inquired whether the Board would need to re-approve the budget following the changes related to the new positions, and Director Morrison answered that would not be necessary. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell noted that the amount of the new investment is lower the amount that the Director

of Corporate Services & CFO can reallocate within staff authority in the Operating Budget Policy.

Board Chair Lowe asked if the budget will be amended when additional revenue is received from the Province this year, and will this need re-approval by the Board. Director Morrison answered that the budget would not be changed, and this would be reflected in actuals. The Board will see a variance explanation when she presents the quarterly financials.

Moved by Melody Ma

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board receive this report for information, and

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board approve the Council-approved VPL 2023 Operating Budget of \$58,868,739.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

POLICIES

4. Living Wage Policy Revisions

Balwinder Rai, Director of Human Resources, noted that the VPL Board agreed at its February 2023 meeting to align VPL's approach with City Council's decisions related to living wage, and introduced the report with the recommendation to direct staff to replace the Living Wage Board Policy with an administrative policy as well as update the VPL Procurement Policy to incorporate the City of Vancouver's amendments.

Trustee Ma asked for historical information on why this is a Board policy rather than an administrative policy. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell responded that it is not clear, but at times in the past, Board policies were made where direction to staff would have been an alternative. She noted that the Board policy is primarily procedural.

Board Chair Lowe asked if staff know what the changes are going to be for the Procurement policy. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell explained the process for policy changes at the City, and that the wording is not yet available; the changes will be to the definitions and section 11. Board Chair Lowe asked if there is anything in VPL's Procurement policy apart from the preamble that is different from the City of Vancouver. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell responded that titles related to the City are changed to equivalent VPL titles, and otherwise the policy is not customized, since the Guidelines on the Relationship between Vancouver City Council and VPL (2008) require that VPL follow the City of Vancouver's policies in this area.

Trustee Ma noted asked about the title of the administrative policy. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell provided clarification that it is a placeholder, and Trustee Ma suggested an alternative title.

Trustee Huang asked about the process for the two policies and how it will be coordinated with the City's updates. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell responded that when the revised section of the Procurement Policy is available, staff will update the VPL policy with the revised wording from the City. The Board direction for the policies will be documented through the report, and the Board's decision to follow Council's decision will be included in the Board regular agenda package for the March meeting.

Trustee Yang noted the review cycle on the existing Board policy and asked if there is continued mechanism in place to ensure review. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell answered that the Board directed staff to return with options on living wage on an annual basis at the February meeting and that will be implemented.

Committee Chair Bottomer asked that staff take a closer look at the Indigenous Considerations section, and Trustee Huang suggested a revision to the discussion section.

Board Chair Lowe asked if staff had a timeline on receiving the revised language for the Procurement Policy. Chief Librarian & CEO de Castell noted that it was expected prior to the next Board meeting.

Moved by Kevin Lowe

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to create an administrative Living Wage Employer policy to replace the existing Board policy, and rescind the current Board policy; and

THAT the Committee recommend that the Board direct staff to update the VPL Procurement policy, based on amendments to the City of Vancouver's Procurement policy.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

ADJOURN

Moved by Victor Huang

There being no further business, the Chair declared the Regular meeting adjourned at 6:02 p.m.

Tim Bottomer, Chair

Christina de Castell, Secretary