

**PRL Board Meeting Minutes
May 23, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Parkland Regional Library Board was called to order at 1:06 p.m. on Thursday May 23, 2019 in the PRL Board Room, Lacombe.

Present: Debra Smith (Board Chair), Jason Alderson, Darlene Dushanek, Colleen Ebden, Kevin Ferguson, Jeanny Fisher, Sandy Gamble, Bruce Gartside, Barb Gilliat, Robyn Gray, Bob Green, Megan Hanson, Jeanette Herle, Alternate John Baswick for Rhonda Hunter, Cora Knutson, Gord Lawlor, Stephen Levy, Ray Olfert, Terilyn Paulgaard, Norma Penney, Rosella Peterman, Gayle Rondeel, Sharolyn Sanchez, Janine Stannard, Les Stulberg, Cindy Trautman, Doug Weir, Sharon Williamson, Bonita Wood, Ann Zacharias

With Regrets: Elaine Fossen, Dwayne Fulton, Blair Morton, Sonia Temple, Patricia Toone

Absent: Jackie Almberg, Jean Bota, Jacqueline Boulet-Boden, Roger Gaetzman, Donnie Hill, Tim Hoven, Trudy Kilner, Lonnie Kozlinski, Dana Kreil, Faye Leicht, Angela Lorente, Brenda McDermott, Josephine McKenzie, Leah Nelson, Roger Nichols, Corby Parsons, Bill Rock, Chris Ross, Jeannette Ruud, Heather Ryan, Leonard Thompson

Guests: Kevin Fergusson (RSM Alberta LLP)

Staff: Ron Sheppard, Donna Williams, Tim Spark, Colleen Schalm, Kara Hamilton

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 1:06 p.m. by Smith.
Smith welcomed everyone.

1.1 Agenda

1.1.2 Adoption of the Agenda

Motion by Lawlor, seconded by Stannard to accept the agenda as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 33/2018-19

1.2. Approval of minutes

Motion by Sanchez, seconded by Stulberg to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2018 meeting as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 34/2018-19

1.3. Business arising from the minutes of February 21, 2018 meeting

Smith asked if there was any business arising from the minutes. There was none.

2.8. Business Arising from the Consent Agenda

Smith asked if there was any business arising from the consent agenda. There was none.

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented was made by Lawlor seconded by Gartside.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PRL 35/2018-19

3.1. Approval of the 2018 Audit

Smith welcomed Kevin Fergusson from RSM. Fergusson presented the audit. The financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of Parkland Regional Library as at December 31, 2018, and its financial performance and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. Fergusson reviewed the financial statements and the report to the board. According to the auditors, there was one current year recommendation to note, "During our review of the journal entry process for the preparation of general journal entries we noted the library has no review over entries being posted." "We recommend that the either monthly or quarterly, Director review general entries posted to the Library's accounting records and initial as acknowledgement of his review." Lastly, "During the year we noted activities through the building grant account had not been recorded in the Library's accounting records. An audit adjustment has been posted for these balances."

In terms of revenue over expenses in 2018, Parkland had a surplus of \$82,824. This was due to vacant staff positions and several retirements.

Motion by Green, seconded by Alderson to approve the Parkland Regional Library Financial Statements and Independent Auditor's Report for 2018 and the Report to the Board as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PRL 36/2018-19

Kevin Fergusson left the meeting at 1:45 p.m.

3.2. Trustee Orientation – How Public Libraries are Funded in Alberta

Sheppard gave a short presentation on the intricacies of Municipal and Public Library Funding in Alberta.

3.3. Budget 2020

The Executive Committee has discussed the development of the 2020 Parkland budget at their last two meetings. Within the budgets, lines with increases really only reflected inflationary costs PRL can't control. Many budget lines remained unchanged between 2019 and 2020. Provincial funding was calculated at 2016 levels since at present staff do not anticipate any increases in grant funding from the Government of Alberta. A provincial budget may not be announced until the fall.

Parkland's service population is 218,595, serving 64 municipalities and 49 libraries. Libraries have seen increased use over 2018 and Parkland has experienced increased demand for regional services that are cost effective and meet the needs of municipal libraries. Unlike all but one other regional system, Parkland does not charge member library boards a yearly requisition.

The optimal budget scenario for Parkland to continue to offer excellent service to member libraries has a potential increase of \$117,884, or 53 cents per capita. This equates to a total budget increase of 3.7%. This scenario allows for the increases to the salary grid, accounts for increased software costs, trustee expenses including the new Advocacy Committee, and a modest increase for additional eContent.

The Executive Committee is contemplating sacrificing new eContent to protect other areas of the budget. In this budget, it equates to a 39 cent increase in municipal requisitions or an \$87,281 increase for a total budget increase of 2.8%.

The requisition increase, in the past 5 years, from 2015 at \$7.73 to 2019 at \$8.25 is 52 cents. The optimal increase in 2020 budget would forecast the per capita requisition rise \$1.05 per capita within a six year period.

Staff do not recommend any further reduction to member library materials allotment. The 2020 allotment rate remains at \$1.13 per capita. PRL allotment is the only materials budget that many of PRL's member libraries have.

Work is ongoing. A new budget will be presented to the Executive Committee for review at the June 13th meeting.

3.4. PRL Investments

According to Parkland's Annual Agenda policy, the Executive Committee is to review PRL's investments at least twice a year. According to PRL policy, the Executive Committee has the responsibility to review and make decisions related to Parkland's investments. The meetings for the review of investments in 2019 occur in April and October.

In past years, PRL only invests its funds in GICs and in a conservative, managed bond portfolio. RBC Wealth Management, Dominion Securities is the company that manages PRL's investment account.

Currently, PRL's interest rate for on demand funds is set at Prime less 1.85%, currently making the rate of return on our current chequing account 2.1%. Given the marginal difference in returns between GICs and Parkland's current account, staff did not plan on investing in GICs at this time. There is also a high likelihood that due to our new headquarters building project that large amounts of funds may be necessary at short notice. Parkland does not want to be caught in a situation where funds are tied up in investments when sudden large expenditures could create cash flow problems. For these reasons, staff did not recommend changing PRL's overall investment strategy of keeping funds in a conservative, managed bond portfolio. At their May 9th meeting, the Executive Committee made the following motion:

Motion by Gartside to leave PRL's investment strategy as is.

CARRIED

Motion by Ebden, seconded by Penney, to receive for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PRL 37/2018-19

3.5. Building Update

Parkland staff received a set of blueprints for our new building from Tricon on March 27th. Staff asked for the "dream building" based on PRL's functional requirements. Unfortunately, it was over 7000 square feet bigger than the original plan.

The total size equaled 21,708 square feet on two floors. This is actually more space than our current building. Part of the reason for the size is that staff are trying to project into the future for population growth and the possibility of the City of Red Deer joining the system.

Tricon provided an average construction cost of \$180 per square foot. That would mean total construction costs would be just over \$3.9 million not including the purchase of land, installation of the SuperNet, or the purchase of new furniture.

Based on a quick estimate, the board has close to \$5 million to dedicate to this project: see below for the breakdown.

- \$2.4 million – GOA Grant
- \$2 million – sale of current building
- \$250,000 Building Reserve
- \$50,000 – Furniture Reserve
- \$200,000 Unrestricted Operating Fund. The fund is currently valued at \$404,000 but we need to replenish the Technology Reserve.

Total \$4,900,000

On April 30th, Parkland staff met with Tricon staff to discuss ideas on how to reduce the cost of the building without negatively affecting functionality. The meeting went very well and Tricon is now working on another set of blueprints.

Staff also do not know which parcel of land PRL is going to purchase. The cost of installing the SuperNet is a very significant expense and Parkland is continuing to explore which piece of property will be less expensive for SuperNet installation. At their highest, costs could run up to \$250,000 for the SuperNet. Staff hope to reduce this cost by 60% to 75%.

Parkland was asked by Tricon to provide a real property report which has been done. Parkland used Bemoco Land Surveying Ltd at a cost of \$2,757.75.

Tricon also conducted its own valuation of the current Parkland building. Tricon used True Point Building Appraisals and paid for the appraisal themselves. Part of the reason for this second appraisal by Tricon is because after PRL sells the building to them, PRL will have to pay a lease rate to Tricon from the time of the sale until Parkland's new building is ready for occupancy during the summer of 2020. The current value of the building will have an impact on the lease price.

Motion by Gilliat, seconded by Lawlor to receive for information

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PRL 38/2018-19

3.6. Advocacy Committee Activity

The Advocacy Committee decided to present their report orally, with each of them taking turns speaking.

The Advocacy Committee has met three times, in March, April, and May, in the afternoons following Executive Committee meetings. The committee is chaired by Gord Lawlor with Barb Gilliat serving as Vice-Chair and Janine Stannard as Executive Committee and Board liaison.

Given the short notice and tight campaign period, the committee made election advocacy their first priority. From the work accomplished at the March meeting, PRL staff created and distributed a 2018-by-the-numbers regional library infographic as well as a set of talking points for use with candidates. The election advocacy initiative was devised, created, and disseminated within two weeks of their first meeting on March 14th.

At the April meeting the committee revisited the four advocacy goals that were identified in March:

1. Libraries need stable funding
2. Libraries need to be seen as a core community service
3. Stakeholders understand **why** libraries are important
4. Residents will be aware of and use the array of library services

The first target audience the committee identified is PRL board members because one of their roles as board members is advocacy, and the board has already recognized that advocacy efforts need to start with PRL. The committee decided to send a short, three question survey to the board to determine what their current perception of libraries is.

Only 17 board members completed the survey despite the opportunity to win a \$25 Amazon gift card. This is less than 50% of the Board, even when you subtract the nine advocacy committee members who chose to abstain from the survey so as not to sway the results. Board member Bonita Wood won the Amazon gift card.

At the May meeting, the committee discussed how the low response rate to the board survey may indicate ambivalence towards library service. Evidently development work needs to be undertaken, including instilling a passion in the board about what regional systems and libraries do. To this end, the committee anticipates an advocacy component at each board meeting to raise enthusiasm for and awareness of the diverse services libraries provide.

To help inspire PRL board members on a personal level, the committee suggested creating a bank of library stories. PRL already had a story bank from The Library Effect campaign a few years ago and committee members reviewed all those stories to select several that demonstrate how the public library can transform people's lives. A story will be included in each board package as part of the work to develop PRL board members into library advocates.

The committee identified a couple of strategies to work towards the next immediate goal of maintaining stable funding to public libraries as the newly elected government develops their budget. PRL will send a tailored letter to each MLA in the region with a request for an introductory meeting. Each MLA will be matched with a member of the Advocacy or Executive committee from that area to attend the meeting along with PRL's Director. In addition, a template letter will be sent to member library boards encouraging them to also send welcome letters to their MLAs and either request an audience or invite the MLA to their library.

The committee also discussed aligning their activities with province-wide public library advocacy initiatives. At the Alberta Library Conference there was an informal meeting of the 16 public library nodes which led to the creation of a welcome letter to the new Minister of Municipal Affairs, Kaycee Madu. The draft letter was completed by the directors of PRL and Yellowhead Regional Library (YRL), signed by all the node library Chairs, and sent to the Minister on May 1st.

This committee believes it is important for Alberta's public libraries to present a unified message at the provincial level. Since Parkland contributed significant content to the letter to the Minister and since they are already actively developing advocacy plans and tools, the committee committed to sharing their work and resources with the wider library community. This includes the slogan "Strong Libraries - Strong Communities - Alberta Strong!"

In addition to working with Yellowhead to maintain the momentum created at Jasper, Parkland is willing to participate in and host collective advocacy development meetings. Work is ongoing.

3.7. Pilot Projects

In PRL's 2019-2021 Strategic Plan, Goal 2, objective c) states:

Member libraries are able to offer increased public library programming options through the initiatives and resources developed at the regional level.

In response to this objective, the PRL Consultant Librarians have teamed up to create two new pilot projects. They will enable Parkland libraries to increase the variety of programming they offer to their communities, without having to incur a prohibitive upfront cost.

Magic of Coding Kit

One of these innovative projects focuses on STEAM programming. Parkland has a number of successful children's programming kits, but few currently employ technology. The Harry Potter Kano coding kit supplements the Kano coding program and will allow children (and adults) to learn about coding. Each kit includes a wand that activates programs created on Kano World software. The software has 70+ creative challenges, which use step-by-step connect code blocks to demonstrate JavaScript functions. There is also a play mode, which will allow users to experiment once they are comfortable with the basics. This kit would include 10 tablets, screen protectors, cases, and the Kano Harry Potter wands and software.

The estimated cost to create this kit was \$3,150

Large Print Book Clubs

The other pilot project involves Large Print Book club kits, an initiative that has been requested by several libraries. These would be targeted towards adults who require large or alternate print formats. PRL intends to create three kits, each containing 10 large print books and two audio books, with a DAISY format available if any print-disabled participants require it. Libraries will be able to request these kits to be used by local book clubs.

The estimated cost to create these kits was \$1,500

To cover unexpected costs staff asked the Executive Committee for up to \$6000 from the Unrestricted Operating Fund. As allowed under PRL's Finance Policy, the Executive Committee made the following motion at their April 11th meeting:

Motion by Stannard to move up to \$6,000 from the Unrestricted Operating Fund to cover the costs of these two pilot projects. (Currently the Unrestricted Operating Fund is valued at over \$404,000.)

CARRIED

Motion by Herle, seconded by Stannard to receive for information

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PRL 39/2018-19

3.8. First Nations Services

Last October Parkland agreed to participate in the Public Library Services Branch (PLSB) sponsored "Voices of Amiskwaciy" project. This project was supposed to be concluded by the end of March. Training related to the project occurred on April 8 and 9th at Parkland.

It was the intention of this project to share local stories and cultural content through a digital public space. The scope of the project is province-wide and includes representation from Indigenous communities in northern, central, and southern Alberta. The idea is to support local and regional capacity in digital Indigenous story creation.

Since the project was not completed by the end of March, PRL's Director requested an extension for the grant's reporting period until June 30th. The extension was approved by Colette Poitras, the Manager, Indigenous Public Library Outreach with the Public Library Services Branch (PLSB), Alberta Municipal Affairs.

Parkland is also working to establish a small semi-permanent library service at the Howard Buffalo Memorial Centre at Maskwacis. This would replace two "Pop-up" libraries currently set up at Maskwacis at the local mall and the Howard Buffalo Memorial Centre. Staff hopes to have the service running sometime in June.

Outreach to the O'Chiese and Sunchild reserves continues to be a challenge partly due to the distance from Lacombe. However, staff are exploring a couple of options that may include local reserve residents providing the equivalent of a kiosk library service and/or a local public library extending service to reserve residents through contract. In May, at a meeting with the Rocky Mountain House library board, Parkland discussed what role the Rocky Mountain House Library might play in outreach to O'Chiese and Sunchild. They have agreed to act as an interlibrary loan (ILL) pick up and drop off location and will allow use of their collection. Parkland will endeavor to hire a person from one of the reserves who can pick up and drop off ILLs at the library in Rocky Mountain House and provide a small kiosk service primarily using library materials from Rocky.

Another matter being dealt with is an effort being made by the City of Wetaskiwin to have all of the bands located on the reserves around Maskwacis reallocated to the Yellowhead Regional Library (YRL) system. At the meeting in Edmonton, a possible permanent solution to the problem of jurisdiction was arrived at but it must be explored further by the PLSB. However, the recent provincial election delayed action which could lead to resolution of this situation.

Motion by Ferguson, seconded by Gilliat to receive for information

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PRL 40/2018-19

3.9. PRL P.D. Day

At the April 11th Executive Committee Meeting, the committee identified increased trustee education as a need for board members throughout the region. The committee asked if Parkland's Fall Conference/Professional Development Day could contain components that would be useful for trustees. Included in the package was the schedule with session descriptions for Parkland's Professional Development Workshop to be held on September 23rd. Virtually the entire agenda is applicable to library board trustees. There is no charge to attend if you are:

- Staff from a member municipality
- A councilor from a member municipality
- A member of the Parkland Board

- A board member from a member library
- Staff from a member library

Online registration will start May 24th.

3.10. Parkland Community Update

PRL's Advocacy Committee discussed the idea of extending the length of board meetings to 3:30 or 4:00 p.m. and/or starting the meetings earlier in the morning. The intent was to allow more time for sharing between board members and to provide more professional development opportunities; particularly in the area of advocacy.

A straw vote was taken for the 3 options for future meetings:

- | | |
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| 1. 1:00-4:00 p.m. | 14 votes |
| 2. 12:30-3:30 p.m. with a small repast | 19 votes |
| 3. 10:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. with lunch | 3 votes |

The next board meeting will be on September 12, 2019 from 12:30-3:30 p.m. An email reminder will be sent out to board members.

Stettler Library has been operating under 2 boards working as one and are looking at forming an intermunicipal board. They are looking to be compliant with *The Libraries Act*; it is not a bid for additional funding.

3.11. Updates

3.11.1. Director's Report

3.11.2. Library Services

3.11.3. IT

3.11.4. Finance and Operations

3.11.5. Alberta Library Conference

Two of the PRL board members, Norma Penney and Sonia Temple, who were selected in the draw at the organizational meeting in November submitted written reports on the Alberta Library Conference which were included in the package. The third, Terilyn Paulgaard, gave a short verbal report on the conference. She had 5 points:

1. She very much enjoyed the speaker Tanya Pollard.
2. The best workshop was the one given by Ken Allen about how library boards and towns work together.
3. She very much appreciated PRL Board member Bob Green taking the time to explain about ALTA.
4. She took to her board the ideas she learned about increasing visibility online for less cost.
5. She would like to see the conference be made more affordable, so that more board members would be able to attend.

3.11.6. ALTA

Smith asked if there were any questions or comments about the Director's, Library Services, IT, Finance and Operations, ALC and ALTA reports.

There was some discussion about advocacy and the work that the Advocacy Committee is doing. It was decided that staff will send the welcome letter from the Alberta Node libraries written to the new Minister of Municipal Affairs, Kaycee Madu on May 1st to all PRL board members, member libraries and the municipalities. It will also be sent out with the Board Talk. There will be some text with instructions to use the talking points in the letter to form their own welcome letters to the Finance Minister and Alberta Government leaders, but that they do not copy the letter verbatim. They should use the ideas in their own words. Ideally, government will receive the same message from many voices, making its impact that much more significant.

Motion by Lawlor, seconded by Olfert to receive the reports for information

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

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Since there was nothing to add, the meeting proceeded to adjournment.

4. Adjournment

Motion by Ferguson, seconded by Stulberg, to adjourn the meeting at 3:35 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

PRL 42/2018-19

Meeting adjourned at 3:35 pm.

Chair