

**PRL Board Meeting Minutes
September 12, 2019**

The regular meeting of the Parkland Regional Library Board was called to order at 12:34 p.m. on Thursday September 12, 2019 in the PRL Board Room, Lacombe.

Present: Debra Smith (Board Chair), Jason Alderson, Jean Bota, Jacqueline Boulet-Boden, Darlene Dushanek, Colleen Ebdon, Kevin Ferguson, Jeanny Fisher, Elaine Fossen, Dwayne Fulton, Sandy Gamble, Bruce Gartside, Barb Gilliat, Robyn Gray, Bob Green, Megan Hanson, Jeanette Herle, Tim Hoven, Rhonda Hunter, Cora Knutson, Stephen Levy, Blair Morton, Ray Olfert, Terilyn Paulgaard, Norma Penney, Rosella Peterman, Heather Ryan, Sharolyn Sanchez, Janine Stannard, Les Stulberg, Sonia Temple, Patricia Toone, Cindy Trautman, Doug Weir, Ann Zacharias

With Regrets: Bill Rock, Gord Lawlor, Bonita Wood, Sharon Williamson

Absent: Jackie Almberg, Roger Gaetzman, Donnie Hill, Trudy Kilner, Lonnie Kozlinski, Dana Kreil, Faye Leicht, Angela Lorente, Brenda McDermott, Josephine McKenzie, Leah Nelson, Roger Nichols, Corby Parsons, Gayle Rondeel, Chris Ross, Jeannette Ruud, Leonard Thompson

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

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 12:34 p.m. by Smith.
Smith welcomed everyone.

1.1 Agenda

1.1.2 Adoption of the Agenda

Motion by Sanchez, seconded by Boulet-Boden to accept the agenda as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 43/2018-19

1.2. Approval of minutes

Motion by Stannard, seconded by Trautman to approve the minutes of the May 23, 2019 meeting as presented.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 44/2018-19

1.3. Business arising from the minutes of May 23, 2019 meeting

Smith asked if there was any business arising from the minutes.

2.8. Business Arising from the Consent Agenda

Smith asked if there was any business arising from the consent agenda.

Motion to approve the consent agenda as presented was made by Temple seconded by Levy.
CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 45/2018-19

3.1. Trustee Orientation by Margaret Law – Advocacy

Law and Schalm left the meeting at 1:16 p.m.
Smith called the meeting back to order at 1:18 p.m.

3.2. Proposed Budget 2020

Sheppard reviewed the proposed budget.

Generally speaking, PRL budgets are prepared with conservative estimates. Revenue is estimated at its minimum level and expenditures are estimated at their maximum level. For 2020, the increase to the municipal per capita requisition is \$8.55. This amounts to a total increase to Parkland's municipalities of \$67,616 spread over a membership population of 218,595. PRL's budget projections for 2020 use the information supplied by the Public Library Services Branch, Alberta Municipal Affairs. For 2020, we project the provincial operating grant to regional systems will remain at \$4.70 per capita and \$5.55 per capita for the rural library service grant. Staff also assume that grant levels will be based on 2016 population statistics.

Schalm entered the meeting at 1:26 p.m.

Within PRL's budget, all provincial funding is based on estimates since staff have absolutely no way of knowing what the Government of Alberta (GOA) will provide in the way of funding. Provincial grants amount to over 45% of PRL's income. As such, changes in provincial funding can have a significant impact on 1) PRL's operating grant; 2) First Nations grant; 3) rural library services grant levels that are passed to libraries. The last year there was increase in operating funding from the GOA was 2017.

Points within the budget to note include:

- The First Nations grant is assumed to continue with a slight increase due to a population redistribution from Public Library Services Branch. Using 2016 population figures, the grant is calculated at \$10.25 per capita. PRL was assigned the Ermineskin Cree Nation on Maskwacis. This band was formerly allocated to the Yellowhead Regional Library system. This additional allocation provided nearly \$36,000 in additional income but also a corresponding expense. *A provision requires that majority of this grant be expended on activities and services that serve on-reserve First Nations populations. Parkland is required to give an annual report that includes financial reporting to the government on what PRL has achieved and how funds were expended. The entire grant CANNOT be rolled into general revenue. *
- Materials Allotment continues to be calculated at \$1.13 per capita.
- eContent Platform fees, Subscriptions has been increased due to adding some additional eContent asked for by our libraries.
- Internet connection fees have been increased slightly due to demands by libraries for extra bandwidth.

- The Audit expense line has been reduced slightly due to Parkland switching its auditor after an RFP process this spring.
- Salaries and benefit increases are provided in compliance with Parkland's "Cost of Living and Compensation Policy". Trustee expenses have increased by \$10,000 to accommodate Advocacy Committee meetings.

As for capital purchases, the largest planned purchase is for computer hardware from the Technology Reserve estimated to be valued at \$225,000. One other anticipated reserve fund transfer for 2020 is for the purchase of two new cargo vehicles valued at \$70,000. Reserves are only replenished by operating surpluses.

Should GOA funding levels change significantly, it may be necessary for the board to approve a revised budget at their November meeting and resubmit it to member municipalities.

Of PRL's total increased expenses anticipated for 2020, (\$111,594) \$58,555 are directly attributed to services and materials that go directly back to libraries. Only a little over \$53,000 will cover increases related to PRL's expenses (remembering that \$10,000 of that are trustee related).

Based on 2019 figures, Parkland continues to receive the second lowest level of gross funding among the seven regional library systems. Despite this fact, Parkland does not charge municipalities without library boards a higher fee nor does PRL charge library boards fees.

There was debate among board members about the level of the increase of the requisition.

Motion by Green, seconded by Gilliat to accept the 2020 Proposed Budget as presented.

CARRIED 6 OPPOSED
PRL 46/2018-19

3.3. **Motions at Board Meetings Policy**

Some months ago, members of the Executive Committee felt the need to clear up some procedural issues related to motions at board meetings. After some work, they developed the draft policy, *Motions at Board Meetings*.

The policy's primary focus is to eliminate the need for seconds from motions, address when it is appropriate for motions to be "reconsidered", and the rescinding of motions. In particular, the Executive Committee wished to avoid situations where matters are brought back to the board repeatedly after a decision has already been made.

Motion by Stannard, seconded by Boulet-Boden to approve the *Motions at Board Meetings Policy*.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 47/2018-19

3.4. **Building Update**

Sheppard presented an update on the progress of PRL's new headquarters building project. Staff met with Tricon on August 21, 2019 and approved the initial version of blueprints for the new building.

Staff then went through the Design/Build specifications document provided by Tricon. Some minor suggestions were made (e.g. more concrete/less landscaping, etc.) but we are now at a point where Tricon will develop "permit drawings" for presentation to the City of Lacombe for approval.

Once the city approves the drawings, the actual detailed "construction" drawings will be developed. This will take about eight weeks.

Staff at Tricon developed a "Prime Contract" for construction of the new building. This was received by Parkland on August 27th. PRL staff will review the contract and pass it on to Parkland's lawyer for further review.

PRL will also need a separate purchase agreement for the land. This will include an agreement for the sale of the current building.

The ground selected for the building is a 1.24 acre lot located on the south-east side of Lacombe just off Hwy 2A. This site has lower land development costs, is serviced by storm drains, and has a lower SuperNet installation cost.

Staff still does not have a revised quote for the SuperNet move. PRL staff have been trying since May to get revised quotes. Sheppard and Spark have sent multiple emails and made almost daily phone calls to expedite obtaining a quote to no result. Given the timeline, staff believe that we will have to purchase land before receiving the quote for the SuperNet.

There is some good news about financing. Details will have to be worked out but there may be ways around having to sell the current headquarters building and rent it back. This may save between \$100,000 and \$150,000 in building costs.

Donna Williams, Parkland's Manager of Finance and Operations, is applying for two "small stream" Community Facility Enhancement Program grants to try and obtain additional money for enhancements to the new headquarters building.

Motion by Penney to receive for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 48/2018-19

Spark left the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Motion by Boulet-Boden to go in camera

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 49/2019-19

3.5. Advocacy Marketing Initiatives

3.6. Audit Proposals

3.7. Banking Proposals

Motion by Ryan to go out of camera

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 50/2018-19

Motion by Stulberg, to receive the Advocacy Marketing Initiatives for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 51/2018-19

Motion by Paulgaard to receive the Audit Proposals for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 52/2018-19

Motion by Levy to receive the Banking Proposals for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 53/2018-19

3.8. CloudLinking

Bibliotheca's cloudLink feature is a unique way to enhance library collections. It works with Bibliotheca's cloudLibrary. CloudLibrary is the platform that hosts the majority of Parkland's eBooks. In the collaborative spirit of consortiums and interlibrary loan, cloudLink "links" the eContent from one library's e-collection (hosted on the cloudLibrary application) to the collections of other libraries.

Benefits of CloudLinking include:

- It improves services to patrons by sharing eContent while still providing local patron priority. Items are only loaned to "other" library patrons if the item is checked in and there are no holds/requests on it.
- It increases circulation of eContent.
- It demonstrates how public libraries are (again) trying to make the most efficient use of public money.

A number of U.S. and Ontario libraries are currently on this platform.

In July, Parkland and Yellowhead Regional Library (YRL) decided to participate in cloudLinking. YRL is a member of The Regional Automation Consortium (TRAC). Trac is made up of YRL and the Marigold, Peace and Northern Lights library systems for the purpose of sharing an Integrated Library System (ILS). TRAC uses cloudLibrary. So, by PRL sharing in cloudLinking with YRL, all TRAC libraries now have access to PRL's eBooks and vice versa. From implementation in July to August 27th, TRAC patrons borrowed 764 eBooks from Parkland and Parkland patrons borrowed 810 items from TRAC. Based on the estimated average cost of an eBook, that amounts to a total of over \$47,000 in value of materials circulated.

CloudLinking costs \$1,300 a year but as Parkland and TRAC are the first to engage in CloudLinking in Alberta, Bibliotheca waived the fee for the first year. Due to the success of this undertaking, other public libraries may be interested in participating as well.

Quite apart from improving patron service, cloudLinking is an excellent advocacy tool as it showcases how public libraries are enhancing service to patrons through collaborative efforts achieved at minimal cost.

Motion by Green to receive for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 54/2018-19

3.9. Movement of Funds Between Reserves

PRL's Executive Committee is empowered to move reserve funds between board meetings. Transactions are normally reported to the board at the next board meeting after the Executive Committee moved funds.

This spring, due to adjustments made by PRL's auditor, the Unrestricted Operating Fund was valued at \$311,145. Since not all PRL's reserves were at the recommended minimum levels as stated in PRL policy, staff asked the Executive Committee to move funds from the Unrestricted Operating Fund to top up reserves. These requests were approved and are detailed below.

The Vehicle Reserve is an unfunded reserve previously valued at \$70,174. It is only replenished in years when PRL has surpluses. Due to extreme mileage, PRL will have to replace two cargo vans in 2020. Without additional funding, there are insufficient funds to pay for the purchases. Staff therefore recommended that \$50,000 be moved from the Unrestricted Operating Fund to the Vehicle Reserve. With this movement of monies, the Vehicle Reserve should be sufficiently funded to cover vehicle purchases through 2022. Moving these funds provided a projected reserve balance of \$120,174 as of January 2020.

Policy states that the Technology Reserve should carry a balance of between \$300,000 and \$500,000. When considering additional purchases this year, it is estimated that the Technology Reserve will be valued at \$152,291 by year end. Staff therefore recommended that \$160,000 be moved from the Unrestricted Operating Fund to the Technology Reserve. This reserve is used to make technology related purchases for PRL headquarters and member libraries. Like the vehicle reserve, the Technology Reserve is only replenished by applying year-end surplus funding to it. After the movement of funds, the Technology Reserve will have an estimated balance of \$312,291 as of January 2020.

Motion by Gartside to receive for information

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 55/2018-19

3.10. First Nations Services

Sheppard reviewed a report on Parkland's First nations related activities. On August 13th, PRL received the signed grant agreement between the Government of Alberta and Parkland for the continuation of the Indigenous Services Grant for 2019-2020. For this grant reporting period, the population for the Ermineskin Cree Nation has been allocated to Parkland rather than Yellowhead Regional Library due to PRL's attempts to establish a public library at Maskwacis which is where the majority of Ermineskin Cree reside.

As with the other operating grants for public libraries, PRL received an initial payment of \$72,801 equaling an assumed 50% of the total grant. The full grant should be over \$145,600. Last year's grant was worth over \$109,600. Parkland is now responsible for providing services to over 14,000 indigenous population on six reserves.

PRL has terminated its "Pop-up" library services at Maskwacis in favour of a semi-permanent library space located in the Howard Buffalo Memorial Center. Open two days a week, this library space is a much more effective way for delivering service to the community. With a small collection of materials, two public access computers, a book drop, and an area for programming, it is hoped that support will grow for the establishment of a true public library within the community. The library space has been operational since early July. The grand opening will be on July 20th at 1:30 p.m. with MLA Rick Wilson attending.

On Monday, August 12th, PRL Board Chair Deb Smith, Director Ron Sheppard, Yellowhead Regional Library (YRL) Director Karla Palichuk, and YRL Board Chair Hank Smit met with MLA Rick Wilson who is the Minister of Indigenous Relations at his constituency in Wetaskiwin. The meeting was organized by YRL. Wilson is the Minister responsible for the Maskwacis/Wetaskiwin constituency, and so is shared between PRL and YRL. The intent of the meeting was to greet the new Minister and familiarize him with the structure of library service and thank the government for the advance in operating funding. A discussion on the restructuring of Indigenous services grants to provide better service also took place with Minister Wilson. Overall, the meeting went very well and Minister Wilson is forwarding the grant restructuring proposal further up through government.

There may be a follow up meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Kaycee Madu, and Grant Hunter, the Associate Minister for the Reduction of Red Tape, to discuss how to improve services to First Nations reserve residents.

Motion by Herle to receive for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 56/2018-19

3.11. Advocacy Committee Activity

Sheppard gave a report on PRL's Advocacy Committee activities.

PRL sent a letter to the Minister of Municipal Affairs Kaycee Madu welcoming him to his new position. PRL also sent another letter to Kaycee Madu thanking him for the 50% of bridge grant funding. Parkland encouraged all member libraries to do the same.

PRL's Director and Chair met with MLA Jackie Lovey of Camrose on July 10th and Ron Orr from the Lacombe/Ponoka constituency on July 12th. Both meetings went well. The intent of the meeting was to build relationships with MLAs and inform them on how vital the government of Alberta's support is for the sustaining of rural public libraries.

PRL's Executive Committee and Advocacy Committee both wanted PRL board members and staff to visit Parkland's MLAs. Letters congratulating all the MLAs on their election were sent out and a number of visits were scheduled. On August 12th, PRL's Chair and Director also met with Minister Rick Wilson the MLA for Maskwacis/Wetaskiwin. This meeting was held in conjunction with Hank Smit the Chair of Yellowhead Regional Library (YRL) and Karla Palichuk YRL's Director. The meeting's purpose was the same as with the other MLAs however a proposal for restricting the First Nations grant funding to better serve the indigenous community was also brought forward. The proposal was well received and there may be a follow up meeting with the Minister

of Municipal Affairs Kaycee Madu and the Associate Minister for the Reduction of Red Tape, Grant Hunter to explore PRL's and YRL's proposal further.

For the MLA visits, speaking notes were created with significant input from the Advocacy Committee. This allowed for consistent messaging though efforts were made to tailor each meeting to suit the interests of the individual MLAs. An emphasis was placed on the social return on investment that public libraries provide to rural communities.

In July, at the direction of PRL's Advocacy Committee, staff sent a package to all our member libraries and boards that included template letters and speaking notes with the encouragement that they either meet with their local MLAs or invite them to their libraries. The aim was to help build relationships and impress on politicians the importance of public libraries to rural communities.

In early August, a significant amount of time was spent by PRL's Director dealing with the misinterpretation of the Government of Alberta's issuing of 50% bridge funding in support as a precursor to issuing library operating grants. Many library boards, library staff, and media interpreted the issuing of 50% of the grant as a reduction of the grant. The same situation occurred when the NDP were elected and had no budget until the fall of the year of their election. PRL staff had to send out multiple communications to member libraries and the media to help them understand there was no cause at this point for concern.

PRL and YRL have had a significant impact on the creation of an Advocacy Committee through The Alberta Library (TAL). Both PRL's and YRL's directors sit on the Advocacy Committee, as do YRL's and PRL's board chairs. The intention is to develop TAL into a venue for collective, province-wide public library advocacy activity. Parkland will be bringing a major marketing enterprise to the TAL Advocacy Committee to see if it can be used as the basis for a province-wide marketing campaign.

Parkland will be engaging in two major marketing initiatives to support libraries. There will be radio advertisement during library card sign up month in September and training for libraries and boards in library promotion using social media. By increasing the profile of libraries, it is easier to advocate on their importance.

It was at PRL's Advocacy Committee's request that Margaret Law was invited to do an advocacy presentation at this board meeting.

PRL is working with YRL, TAL, and the Alberta Library Trustees' Association (ALTA) on advocacy initiatives including the creation of a "briefing book". A briefing book is designed to answer questions in a direct, simple, and consistent manner. For example, what if a member of council or an MLA asks "What is the point of print books and libraries in the age of eBooks and google?" Or "Why do we have regional library systems that don't even serve the public?". The briefing book will have a quick answer so even library supporters who are not experts in the field can give a reply.

Motion by Trautman to receive for information.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 57/2018-19

3.12.1. Director's Report

A written report was included in the package. There were no questions from the board.

3.12.2. Library Services

A written report was included in the package. There were no questions from the board.

3.12.3. Finance and Operations

A written report was included in the package. There were no questions from the board.

3.13. Parkland Community Update

Alix Public Library was closed for three weeks with renovations. They thank the Ponoka Jubilee library for the gift of some extra shelves. They re-opened the day of the parade and gained 13 new memberships! Their official Grand re-opening is on September 21st at 11:00 a.m. with MLA Ron Orr in attendance.

Sedgewick & District Municipal library bought an Oculus Rift kit and it has been a huge hit with their patrons. They have gained 20 new memberships in the last two weeks from children who line up for their 30-minute turn with the very popular Virtual Reality game.

The Clive Public Library hosted a village wide garage sale on Saturday. They made \$1,500.00.

Sylvan Lake Municipal Library hosted a cultural event for Alberta Arts and Culture Days. An Executive Director will be hired soon.

Eckville Municipal Library also received shelves from Ponoka Jubilee Library, and they are lovely. Helen Posti, the alternate board member from the town of Eckville, presented a certificate in recognition of Parkland Regional Library's 60th Anniversary.

3.14. 60th Anniversary Cake and Activities

Smith encouraged board members to stay for cake and activities to acknowledge Parkland's 60th Anniversary.

4. Adjournment

Motion by Ferguson to adjourn the meeting at 3:10 p.m.

CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY
PRL 58/2018-19

Meeting adjourned at 3:10 p.m.

Chair