



PRLS Board Meeting Minutes February 24, 2022

The regular meeting of the Parkland Regional Library System Board was called to order at 10:02 a.m. on Thursday February 24, 2022 in the Small Board Room, Lacombe.

Present: Debra Smith (Board Chair), Gord Lawlor

Present via Zoom: Jackie AlMBERG, Alison Barker-Jevne, Doug Booker, Edna Coulter, Teresa Cunningham, Cal David, Amanda Derksen, Jeff Eckstrand, Marie Flowers, Elaine Fossen, Dwayne Fulton, Barbara Gibson, Barb Gilliat, Pam Hansen, Gail Knudson, Guy Lapointe, Stephen Levy, Daryl Lougheed, Julie Maplethorpe, Philip Massier, Marc Mousseau, Joy-Anne Murphy, Jackie Northey, Shawn Peach, Norma Penney, Leonard Phillips, Lori Reid, Teresa Rilling, Bill Rock, Heather Ryan, Sandy Shipton, Les Stulberg, Delaney Thoreson, Patricia Toone, Doug Weir, Carlene Wetthuhn, Shannon Wilcox, Sharon Williamson, Janice Wing

With Regrets: Diane Roth, Bill Windsor

Absent: Jaime Coston, Lisa Ferguson, Bruce Gartside, Dana Kreil, Ricci Matthews, Bryce Olson, Ray Reckseidler

Staff: Ron Sheppard, Tim Spark, Donna Williams, Kara Hamilton, Haley Amendt, Hailey Halberg

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Smith.

As part of PRLS' legislative compliance procedures, board members who send regrets are excused at the beginning of each meeting.

Motion by Barb Gilliat to excuse Diane Roth and Bill Windsor from attendance at the board meeting on February 24, 2022 and remain members of the Parkland Board in good standing.

CARRIED
PRLS 1/2022

1.1 Agenda

1.1.2 Adoption of the Agenda

Motion by Teresa Rilling to accept the agenda as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 2/2022

1.2. Approval of Minutes

Smith asked if there were any amendments to the November 4, 2021 minutes. There were none.

Motion by Stephen Levy to approve the minutes of the November 4, 2021 meeting as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 3/2022

1.3. Business arising from the minutes of the November 4, 2021 meeting

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

2. Business Arising from the Consent Agenda

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

Motion by Cal David to approve the consent agenda as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 4/2022

3.1. 2021 in Review – Approval of the 2021 Annual Report

Sheppard reviewed the 2021 Annual Report. Each year Parkland is required to submit an annual report to the Public Library Services Branch (PLSB) at Municipal Affairs.

Given the challenges of 2021 with its service interruptions and library closures caused by the pandemic, an extensive statistical comparison between 2020 and 2021 was of limited value, however, some highlights are worth noting:

- Parkland obtained 28 smart hubs donated by TELUS with unlimited data and distributed them to our small, rural member libraries. The smart hubs started circulating to patrons on April 8th, 2021. Since that time, they have circulated 389 times and have 26 holds on them (data as of February 14).
- On September 22-24, 2021, Parkland Regional Library System, The Alberta Library, Peace Library System, and Yellowhead Regional Library hosted the Stronger Together Virtual Conference for a second year in a row. The conference consisted of 23 sessions, 2 wellness sessions, 2 keynotes, and a pre-conference keynote. Total registrations equaled a stunning 1,126. Feedback from conference attendees was very positive with 87% giving the conference either a four or five star rating out of five.
- Parkland provided an extra \$25,000 for additional eContent paid for from reserves.
- Parkland made board members and staff of Yellowhead Regional Library permanent members of Parkland's Advocacy Committee.
- Renewed our Internet service contract allowing us to increase bandwidth by 25% for the entire PRLS region while saving over \$5,500/year
- Open house and BBQ event last June with over 400 attendees to celebrate PRLS' new headquarters
- Created a Tik Tok account and incorporated more video content to reach younger generations
- 800 survey responses from members of the public from the Parkland Region to inform marketing activities

- The Parkland board very much appreciates that public libraries were recognized as an important service in 2021 and allowed to operate with restrictions. The services libraries provided were essential to the mental well-being of many and offered many vital resources to families who found themselves unintended homeschoolers.

Motion by Shannon Wilcox to approve the Parkland Regional Library System's *2022 Public Library Survey and 2021 Annual Report* as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 5/2022

3.2. Approval of the 2021 Outlet Annual Reports

Sheppard reviewed. The Parkland Board is the governing board for four library service points. Under the Alberta Libraries Act, the PRLS Board must approve the annual reports for these service points. They are:

Brownfield Community Library – County of Paintearth
Nordegg Public Library – Clearwater County
Spruce View Community Library – Red Deer County
Water Valley Public Library – Mountain View County

As with Parkland's annual report, the last two years of COVID restrictions have made it difficult to establish service benchmarks or comparative statistics. However, it was clear that Parkland's four outlet libraries had done much to adapt their services in an attempt to support their patron base through a very difficult period of time. After reviewing their annual reports, in view of the impressive efforts made by Parkland's outlet libraries, the board requested that the board chair draft a letter of appreciation expressing the boards thanks for the work done by staff and volunteers of the four outlet libraries.

Motion by Teresa Rilling to express appreciation to the outlet libraries for their hard work and dedication throughout the pandemic.

CARRIED
PRLS 6/2022

Motion by Stephen Levy to approve the annual reports from Brownfield Community Library, Nordegg Public Library, Spruce View Community Library, and Water Valley Public Library as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 7/2022

3.3 OverDrive Reciprocal Lending Agreement

Sheppard explained. Since 2019, Parkland has been sharing eBooks and eAudio books from its CloudLibrary Collection with the four library systems that make up The Regional Automation Consortium (TRAC). This ability to 'interlibrary loan' eContent has saved countless dollars and proved to be a hugely beneficial service to library patrons.

Following on this success, Parkland has recently entered another agreement with TRAC to share the eBooks and eAudio books available on our other major eContent platform OverDrive.

There is no cost for this service. OverDrive has long been considered to be the premier eContent provider, so not only is this partnership of tremendous financial value and provides improved service, it also demonstrates to funders how public libraries are always seeking to leverage partnerships for the purposes of efficiency and sustainability.

As of January 24, 2022, OverDrive eBooks and eAudiobooks are now being shared between Parkland, Yellowhead Regional Library, Peace, Northern Lights, and Marigold library systems offering patrons access to tens of thousands of new items.

Motion by Heather Ryan to receive for information

CARRIED
PRLS 8/2022

3.4. **eAudiobook and Lucky Day Purchases**

Amendt reviewed the eAudiobook and Lucky Day purchases.

eAudiobook purchase: Parkland is currently sharing eBooks and eAudiobooks with four other library systems that make up the TRAC consortium. TRAC consists of the Yellowhead, Northern Lights, Marigold, and Peace library systems. Parkland staff requested funds to purchase a bulk amount of eAudiobooks for cloudLibrary, one of the platforms through which Parkland shares resources with TRAC.

These items are very popular throughout the region and also help support the blind and visually impaired populations of Alberta. This resource sharing not only improves patron service, but also results in significant cost savings.

At their January 27th meeting, the Executive Committee approved the expenditure of \$30,000 in reserve funds to purchase eContent for CloudLibrary.

Lucky Day Collection: OverDrive, one of Parkland's two major eBook and eAudiobook providers, has created a "Lucky Day Collection" feature. This feature disables holds and renewals for designated copies of eTitles. This allows users to skip the wait list for popular titles and borrow them right away. Parkland has decided to create a Lucky Day Collection for items that have 30+ holds. Parkland eContent has continued to grow in popularity and to maintain high customer service Parkland strives to purchase 1 copy for every 10 holds to a max of 5 copies. For this new digital collection Parkland will designate every 3rd copy for the Lucky Day Collection.

Due to the popularity of eContent, Parkland struggles to maintain this 1:10 hold ratio. To address the situation, staff requested funds to create a quality Lucky Day Collection that meets the needs of our OverDrive users.

At their last meeting, the Executive Committee authorized the movement of \$11,000 for the purchase of content for Parkland's Lucky Day Collection.

Motion by Teresa Cunningham to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 9/2022

3.5. Parkland's Strategic Plan 2023-2025 Needs Assessment Process

Sheppard reviewed. The major component of Parkland's needs assessment process for a new 2023-2025 strategic plan is online focus groups. The focus group meetings were held on:

- Thursday, February 10th, 1:00 to 4:00 PM
- Thursday, February 10th, 6:00 to 9:00 PM
- Friday, February 11th, 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM

63 people attended over the three meetings. Some of the priorities coming out of the meetings were:

- Marketing and Advocacy
- HR and OH&S assistance
- Library communications assistance
- Mental Health First Aid

The target audiences for these focus groups included library managers and board members, municipal councilors and administrators, Parkland Regional Library staff, and members of the PRLS Board. Shari Hanson, a Community Development Officer with the Community Development Unit from Alberta Culture and Status of Women, facilitated the meetings.

In addition to the focus groups, a system services survey has been sent to member libraries and a review of member library plans of service has also been undertaken. This work is ongoing.

Motion by Norma Penney to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 10/2022

3.6. Parkland Art Appraisal

Sheppard reviewed. Parkland has accumulated many pieces of art over the last thirty years as gifts. Prior to the move to the new facility, the Director undertook some cursory research and determined some of the art work might be quite valuable.

Staff sought to find a reputable appraiser and received some recommendations from our legal firm in Red Deer, Chapman Riebeck. Using their recommendations, staff contacted the appraisers and selected the Willock and Sax Gallery located in Banff as the best balance between cost, thoroughness, and timeliness.

The valuation report has been completed. While the total value of the art only equals \$21,000, staff have added some additional insurance coverage at the cost of \$25.75 per year to protect against damage or loss.

After some discussion about sharing the art with other organizations for display purposes, a motion was made:

Motion by Philip Massier to start the process of collaborating with the Lacombe Memorial Centre to display Parkland's art collection.

CARRIED
PRLS 11/2022

3.7. **Advocacy Committee Report**

Gord Lawlor reviewed the Advocacy Committee's activity since the last board meeting in November.

The Advocacy Committee has identified their goals for 2022. These include:

- Positioning libraries to emerge advantageously following the upcoming provincial election.
- Advocating for increased library funding from the Government of Alberta.
- Assisting libraries with the marketing of their services. This is particularly important as libraries recover from the drop in use caused by COVID-19 restrictions.
- The creation of a unified advocacy strategy for all public libraries since advocacy is most effective when it is presented with consistent messages and a unified voice. Ideally, a unified strategy would be developed prior to the election throughout all of Alberta's public library community.

The committee also believes that two advocacy goals from 2021 need to be continued in 2022 and be considered as ongoing. They are:

- To continue to focus on advocacy to the system board and ensure there is an advocacy learning component at each board meeting.
- To continue helping libraries advocate for themselves at the local level.

As it relates to advocacy, Parkland recently received notice that Parkland Consultant Haley Amendt has had her advocacy presentation *Advocacy, Whose Role is it Anyway?* accepted at the Marigold Library System's 2022 conference. Accompanying Haley will be Gord Lawlor from Parkland's Advocacy Committee.

With many action items and activities already under development by the Advocacy Committee, 2022 is already showing signs of being a busy year. Board members need to remember that they are our biggest advocates. To help them understand their role in this regard, Shawn Peach and Gord Lawlor gave a short, informative presentation on advocacy.

Motion by Len Phillips to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 12/2022

3.8. **Parkland Community Update**

Stettler Public Library held their third Wine Survivor fundraiser via Facebook Live and it was such a success that they will continue to use it in future events. Friends of the Library brought in \$10,000 in a tough year and are using some of the funds to renovate the children's area in the library.

The new Blackfalds Public Library is now open and has been very well received.

Bentley Municipal Library is holding early literacy programs and is now also lending cakepans.

Bashaw Municipal Library won the highest percentage at *Read for 15* for the third year in a row.

Castor Municipal Library is forming a Friends of the Library group.

Penhold and District Public Library has many programs running: *1000 books before kindergarten*, quilting, watercolor and ukulele lessons, game night and after-school club. Minigolf has been popular with over 100 people. Thank you to Didsbury for providing the minigolf registration forms!

The Innisfail Trade Show is being planned and the Innisfail Public Library will be participating once again. The library has formed great partnerships with organizations like the Dayhome Society to provide programs for providers, parents and children that are literacy and activity based.

3.9.1. Director & Library Services Report

3.9.2. I.T. Report

3.9.3. Finance & Operations Report

3.9.4. Marketing Report

3.9.5. ALTA Report

Smith asked if there were any questions regarding the Director & Library Services Report, IT, Finance and Operations, Marketing, or ALTA Reports. There were none.

Motion by Barb Gilliat to receive the Director & Library Services Report, IT, Finance and Operations, Marketing, or ALTA Reports for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 13/2022

4. Adjournment

Motion by Teresa Rilling to adjourn the meeting at 11:32 a.m.

CARRIED
PRLS 14/2022

Meeting adjourned at 11:32 a.m.

Chair