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# PRLS BOARD TALK

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## Highlights of the Parkland Regional Library Board Meeting MAY 16, 2024

### PRLS 2023 Audit

Parkland's audit was presented to the board by MNPs Lindsey Bauman and Erin Switenky. The audit reports were previously presented by Schmidt and Switenky at the March Executive Committee meeting where they were approved.

Bauman noted that there were no recommendations or management letter this year, which shows the commitment of Parkland Staff to ensuring Parkland has sound financial management.

A copy of the Auditor's Report and Report to the Board has been sent to your municipality.

### 2025 Budget

In response to direction provided by the Executive Committee, staff have prepared the draft 2025 budget. Some points included:

- Overall, expenditures are anticipated to increase by 1.9% in 2025.
- Now that they are being updated, switching back to Municipal Affairs Population Lists instead of the Treasury Board Estimates for invoicing municipalities resulted in a drop of 9,277 population which Parkland will no longer invoice on.
- To balance the budget, it will be necessary to increase the municipal requisition/levy by sixty-three cents.
- Had it been appropriate for Parkland to continue using the population figures supplied by the

Treasury Board, the 2025 requisition would have been approximately forty cents per capita lower.

A letter from Ric McIver, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, confirmed that library funding will be stable in 2025.

The Parkland budget with full notes will be brought back to the board in September for formal approval.

### PRLS Membership Agreement

At the February board meeting there was discussion about the possibility of opening and thoroughly revising Parkland's membership agreement.

At their March 21st meeting, the Executive Committee approved a motion recommending the board leave the membership agreement as it is.

The Parkland board also voted to leave the membership agreement with no changes.

### PRLS Compensation Policy

The Parkland board passed a new compensation policy along with a new salary grid at their meeting in November 2023, which is set to take effect in January 2025. Staff worked with the Executive Committee on how the new salary grid would be implemented.

When examining the new compensation policy within the context of implementing the new grid, it became apparent that some clarification in the wording of the policy would be useful.

The amended Compensation Policy was passed with no issues.

### Board Room Recording Equipment

With the advent of COVID-19 and Parkland's switch to virtual "Zoom" meetings, the technology allowed Parkland to record board discussions and motions. While the board opted for virtual meetings for 2024, many board members prefer in-person meetings and there is always the possibility Parkland will return to in-person board meetings in the future.

At the October 2023 Executive Committee meeting, a motion was made that all board meetings be recorded and posted publicly. For board meetings to be recorded, Parkland will either have to remain holding board meetings online in perpetuity, or implement upgrades to the board room's sound system to accommodate the recording of in-person meetings.

The matter was discussed at the March Executive Committee meeting and they agreed that purchasing equipment for recording board meetings is not a priority at this time, especially if board meetings remain virtual.

The PRLS board agreed, and there will be no equipment purchase at this time.

## Marketing and Advocacy Committee

**Report** Parkland's new Return on Investment documents are available on Parkland's website.

There is a small change in the ROI documents for Parkland Counties. In past years, the sharing of resources among libraries was calculated using only the statistics for those counties with an outlet library. However, when calculating the amounts for items such as materials allotment, technology savings, and the Rural Library Services Grant, the combined statistics for all area libraries were used. Staff discussed this matter with the Advocacy and Executive Committees and both voiced strong support for including the full resource sharing numbers from all libraries in each county for the sake of consistency. Each municipality will have their ROI emailed to them.

**As board members, your advocacy assignment is to ensure the ROI for your member municipality is presented to council. If council or administration has any questions about their ROI that you can't answer, please have them contact Parkland directly and staff will be happy to answer any questions or meet with municipal council or administration.**

In February a letter was drafted and distributed by the Library Association of Alberta (LAA) on the issue of the Government of Alberta's position on *Parental Rights*. This letter was sent to all major news outlets, the LAA membership, and to all Parkland libraries by LAA's President. This is the first time in living memory a library association has taken a position on a political issue in Alberta. Parkland has been a member of LAA for decades. LAA is a multi-sector library association.

Parkland's Executive and Advocacy Committees reviewed LAA's letter. Subsequently, Parkland made inquiries with our local member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) Jennifer Johnson and were informed no legislation has been drafted. This means the LAA was taking a position on legislation that does not yet exist.

In addition to sending Parkland's response letter to the LAA, it was sent to all Parkland member libraries, since the LAA President sent the letter to all Parkland libraries through their Parkland email account and not an LAA one.

A response to Parkland's letter from the LAA was received on May 6<sup>th</sup> and another letter was received from the City of Camrose Public Library Board on May 7<sup>th</sup>. A response from PRLS Board Chair Barb Gilliat was sent to the Camrose Library Board on May 9<sup>th</sup>.

## Committee News from Trustees

**Hardisty Public Library** has partnered with Vision Credit Union to receive a helping hand grant for \$5,000 to provide cement steps and hand rails for the library. They also have a ground level automatic door at their side entrance.

**Bentley Municipal Library** is celebrating their 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June.

**Innisfail Public Library** celebrated their 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary on April 13<sup>th</sup> with a cake and time capsule. They have also launched a new program, a human library, in cooperation with the Innisfail Welcoming and Inclusive Community Committee.

**Camrose Public Library** is starting a fund in cooperation with the Battle River Community Foundation, with seed money of \$10,000, which was provided by an anonymous donor. They also have 3 summer students hired with help from a federal government program. Lastly, they are holding intellectual freedom training on May 27<sup>th</sup> with James Turk for their staff and library board.

**Stettler Public Library** have their summer student pages returning for the 4<sup>th</sup> year in a row.

**Penhold and District Public Library** acquired a telescope and are creating policy to lend it out to the public. They are currently gearing up for summer reading club.

## Board Members Present

Barb Gilliat (Board Chair), Gord Lawlor, Ray Reckseidler, **(Zoom)** Jackie Almborg, Alison Barker-Jevne, Laureen Clark-Rennie, Deb Coombes, Jaime Coston, Teresa Cunningham, Todd Dalke, Cal David, Dana Depalme, Sarah Fahey, Richard Forsberg, Elaine Fossen, Dwayne Fulton, Barbara Gibson, Twyla Hale, Kathy Hall, Pam Hansen, Cody Hillmer, Cody Johnson, Dana Kreil, Bryce Liddle, Julie Maplethorpe, Ricci Matthews, Marc Mousseau, Joy-Anne Murphy, Jordon Northcott, Jackie Northey, Jas Payne, Leonard Phillips, Diane Roth, Sandy Shipton, Deb Smith, Les Stulberg, Harvey Walsh, Carlene Wetthuhn, Shannon Wilcox, Bill Windsor, Janice Wing