



PRL BOARD TALK

Highlights of the Parkland Regional Library Board Meeting

MAY 28, 2020

Audit Report Approved

PRL's audit was presented to the board by MNPs Lindsey Schmidt and Joey Ingram. In the documents provided, the auditors state:

The accompanying financial statements present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Library as at December 31, 2019, and the results of its operations, its remeasurement gains and losses and its cash flows for the year then ended in accordance with the Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Findings from the audit include three recommendations for improving controls. These recommendations relate to 1) fixed asset disposal; 2) impairment testing for property, plant, and equipment; and 3) the review of the Director's credit card transactions. As recommended, staff are preparing additions to the finance policy to meet the auditor's recommendations.

There were no significant changes in the balance sheet. The three recommendations for improving controls were minimal and are already being changed in policy by Parkland staff.

A copy of the Auditor's Report and Report to the Board will be sent to your municipality.

eContent Purchasing

For 2020, Parkland budgeted \$20,000 each for eBooks and eAudiobooks. Due to the COVID-19 crisis, Parkland has expended almost all of this \$40,000 for eBooks and eAudio books for 2020. The intention was to enhance

the access to eContent since library patrons have almost no access to physical content. The early expenditure of our budget meant that there would be no money for additional eContent later in the year.

Staff asked the Executive Committee for permission to overrun the eContent budget line by \$20,000. Due to the increased demand for eBooks and eAudio books, caused by the shutdown of libraries during the COVID pandemic, the Executive Committee approved the additional eContent expenditures at their April 30th meeting.

In addition, Parkland staff reached out to the Lions Clubs earlier in the year to ask for contributions to purchase eAudiobooks for the regional collection, which supports the visually impaired community. The Lions Clubs in Innisfail, Forestburg, Killam and Clive have graciously donated \$1,828.58, which provided 25 more titles for the Parkland Collection. We are very grateful for their support.

PRL Advocacy Committee

Earlier this year, the goal that the Advocacy Committee decided they needed to focus on is that municipalities are aware of and support public library services at the regional and local levels. Despite the COVID-19 pandemic, this advocacy goal has not changed.

At their last meeting, the committee considered some important questions:

1. How do we position libraries as essential or at least valued services?
2. How do we continue to prove the value of Parkland and local library budgets in the post-pandemic economy?
3. What do post-COVID libraries look like?
4. What kind of messaging do we need to advocate for Parkland and local library budgets in the post-pandemic economy?

After a lengthy facilitated session, the committee provided an extensive amount of material that can be categorized into a number of themes:

- Libraries need to innovate and continue to provide service even during the pandemic. The worst thing a library board can do is shut down services entirely.
- The board and staff must place a high emphasis on communication within the community to both funders and their patrons. During this

- period of closure to the public, library communication is more important than ever.
- Libraries need to be realistic about the post-pandemic world. Patrons might have developed different service expectations (e.g. want a continuation of virtual services, curbside pickup, etc.), and/or they may be reticent about in-person library visits and using library materials.
 - Library boards need to be realistic about their budget expectations if they want their budgets to pass. Municipalities are struggling, so boards should only be asking for what they absolutely need.

The vast majority of libraries continue to have staff on duty with many providing innovative services. Of Parkland's 50 libraries, 39 are currently providing some level of service to their communities. Furthermore, Parkland continues to serve as a support and distribution hub to share information and resources between member libraries so that they can provide the most service possible at this time.

Community News from Trustees

Olds & District Library- Heather Ryan reported that their library board has been very proud of all the work the staff at the Olds library has been doing during the pandemic. Staff is now working on their re-launch plan.

Stettler Public Library - Les Stulberg reported that they now have enhanced online programming and are offering curbside pickup. They are also helping to provide PPE items to their local hospital. They have been both busy and innovative.

Lacombe County - Dana Kreil reported that they are using this time to replace the flooring at the Eckville Municipal Library. They anticipate offering curbside pickup when the library is put back together.

Amisk Public Library is now offering curbside service. They are also collaborating with the Buffalo Trail School Division to loan Chromebooks for online crafts for their summer reading club.

Lougheed & District Public Library is offering craft kits that can be picked up from the library so that children can participate in online craft time.

Board Members Present via Zoom

Jason Alderson, Doreen Blumhagen, Darlene Dushanek, Kevin Ferguson, Jeanny Fisher, Elaine Fossen, Dwayne Fulton, Sandy Gamble, Bruce Gartside, Barb Gilliat, Megan Hanson, Jeanette Herle, Agnes Hoveland, Cora Knutson, Dana Kreil (late), Gord Lawlor, Faye Leicht, Stephen Levy, Josephine McKenzie, Philip Massier, Leah Nelson, Ray Olfert, Terilyn Paulgaard, Norma Penney, Rosella Peterman, Bill Rock, Chris Ross, Heather Ryan, Sharolyn Sanchez, Janine Stannard, Les Stulberg, Sonia Temple, Patricia Toone, Cindy Trautman, Shannon Wilcox (late), Bill Windsor, Bonita Wood, Ann Zacharias

With Regrets

Dana Kreil (Late) and Blair Morton

Absent

Jackie AlMBERG, Wendy Aschenbrenner, Connie Beringer, Jared Booth, Jacqueline Boulet-Boden, Glen Carrit, Amanda Derksen, Colleen Ebdon, Clark German, Trudy Kilner, Lonnie Kozlinski, Daryl Lougheed, Rick Pankiw, Corby Parsons, Doug Weir, Sharon Williamson

Guests via Zoom

Lindsey Schmidt, Joey Ingram, MNP
Also in the office, Debra Smith (Board Chair)

PRL Staff

Ron Sheppard, Tim Spark, Donna Williams, Colleen Schalm, Kara Hamilton, Haley Amendt

**Next Meeting: September 17,
2020, 1:00 PM.**

For more information or if you want a copy of the draft minutes from this board meeting, please contact PRL.