

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PRINCE GEORGE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
HELD WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 28, 2024 AT 6:30 PM
KEITH GORDON ROOM AT BOB HARKINS/ONLINE VIA ZOOM**

Present: Jenne Amell (Vice Chair)
Kirsten Thomson
Rahim Somani
Jen Wilczek
Erin Anderlini
Vash Ebbadi-Cook

Also Present: Paul Burry (Library Director)
Kyanna Coe (Manager of Finance & Facilities)

Regrets: Anna Duff (Chair)
Andrea Palmer
Councillor Garth Frizzell

6:30 p.m. Board Photo Session

Individual and Group Photos of the Library Board by Focal Point Studio.

1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

- The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m.
- Board Vice Chair Jenne Amell shared a territorial acknowledgement of the unceded traditional territory of the Lheidli T'enneh people, and welcomed everyone to the board meeting.

2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Motion: That the Library Board approve the minutes of the January 27, 2024 meeting as distributed. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.

3. APPROVAL OF MEETING AGENDA

Motion: That the Library Board approve the agenda for the February 28, 2024 meeting as distributed. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.

4. ACCEPTANCE OF CONSENT AGENDA

Motion: That the Library Board accept the Consent Agenda as distributed. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.

5. REPORTS/PRESENTATIONS

a) Board Chair Report – Anna Duff

- Anna has submitted a written report as she is away for this meeting.

Continuing work to welcome LTFN and RDFFG members to board

Paul, Garth, and Anna met to further discuss what the expansion of the PGPL board might look like as we prepare to have conversations with LTFN and RDFFG. We will have discussions with representatives from each government and share the opportunity for them to appoint one member each to the PGPL board.

Next steps involve setting up meetings and creating an agreement to detail the goals and expectations of this opportunity.

Expanding our reach

Anna attended the Lunar New Year celebration on February 10 and was very impressed to observe how kindly and efficiently staff welcomed and guided all the patrons before and during the dragon dance around the upper floor of the library.

Anna also participated in the Jeanne Clarke Local History Awards on February 25. It was a delight to have Kym Gouchie, past Service Award winner, announce this year's awards recipients. Rogers TV prepared short video clips of all the nominees and was present to record the awards ceremony. It was really nice to see the attendees eagerly arrive as soon as the doors opened and stay for conversation and food afterwards. Thanks to Vash and Garth for spending part of their Sunday afternoon at the library and representing our board!

Developing partnerships and advocacy

A former colleague connected Anna with the executive director of NatureKids BC mainly due to her role at Tourism Prince George, but also partially due to her connection with PGPL.

NatureKids BC helps children get outdoors to explore, play, learn about and take action for nature. Anna mentioned PGPL's birdwatching and hiking kits, Knowledge Garden, and creative programming offerings.

Committee Work

Attended the Governance Committee meeting last week.

Attended the Library Advancement Committee meeting where Jen was acclaimed as chair of the LAC. Congratulations Jen! This marks the end of Anna's three years as chair of the committee.

b) Library Director – Paul Burry

Improving the User Experience

Plan, deliver, and build awareness of library services and programs that respond to the needs of our community.

The Malayalam Language School hosted at the Nechako Branch on February 17th was attended by 25 participants. The program was requested by a local group of Malayalam speaking community members.

Expanding our Reach

Create opportunities for reaching community groups and individuals who are not regular users of the library.

PGPL staff launched their celebration of Freedom to Read Week on February 19th at the library's kiosk at the Prince George Cougars hockey game on Family Day. The library display featured a large banner declaring "I'm With the Band," and invited visitors to have their photo taken in front of the banner holding oversized versions of the covers of their favourite banned books. The interactive display is intended to start conversations about the ongoing struggle against book censorship in Canadian libraries, raising awareness of these important issues impacting our own community. The display will be featured throughout the week at the Bob Harkins Branch.

The reception for the 39th annual Jeanne Clarke Awards for Local History was held at the Bob Harkins Branch on February 25th. The Service Award was won by 92-year-old Prince George resident Clarence Boudreau. The Publication Award was presented to Katherine Palmer Gordon for her book *This place is who we are: stories of Indigenous leadership, resilience, and connection to their homelands*. The reception was attended by over 100 people.

The Library's booth at Winterfest on February 17th at City Hall attracted approximately 230 visitors. Library staff shared information and brochures about PGPL programs and services.

"Bookworm Boogie" musical concert for children and families featuring Will's Jams, was hosted at the Bob Harkins Branch on February 3rd. The Coldsnap Festival event was attended by 178 people.

Developing Partnerships & Advocacy

Make connections and build relationships with community partners and library stakeholders representing the diversity of our region.

Paul participated in a Board Meeting of the Association of BC Public Library Directors (ABCPLD) in his role of Secretary/Treasurer on February 21st.

PGPL celebrated Black History month with a display of African and Caribbean arts and fashion in the stairwell display featured throughout February at the Bob Harkins Branch. Celebrations will culminate on February 24th with a series of cultural activities at the branch, including a Black History themed story time.

The Lunar New Year celebration at the Bob Harkins Branch on February 10th attracted approximately 380 people. The afternoon of activities, including the dragon dance, Nian monster puppet show, and a number of crafting activities, was hosted in partnership with Neulbom Korean School Society, Chinese Benevolent Association, and SpeakWrite Academy. 835 people visited the Bob Harkins Branch during the course of the day.

Designing Welcoming Spaces

Create safe, attractive, inclusive library spaces that the community can take pride in.

The Library hosted the “Sharing Circle with Marcel Gagnon” at the Bob Harkins Branch on February 7th. The event was hosted in partnership with Canadian Artists for Reconciliation and Education (CARE) and the Coldsnap Music Festival. Gagnon, a composer, musician, and beaver clan elder from the Lheidli T’enneh Nation, shared his stories and experiences with the 50 attendees.

The Library’s new phone system has been installed and will be launched the week of February 26th.

Extended open hours at the Nechako Branch will commence on March 7th. The branch will stay open until 8:00 pm on Thursday evenings.

Strengthening Staff Communications & Relationships

Promote and support collaborative relationships among library staff, encouraging a culture of cooperation and innovation.

PGPL has updated its procedures for the Job Evaluation Committee. A collaborative effort between CUPE representatives and PGPL management, the committee is working to ensure that all new and changed employment positions in the bargaining unit are evaluated to ensure fair compensation for library staff.

PGPL and CUPE Local 4951-04 have signed a MOU to ensure that any raises in the provincial minimum wage rate are implemented to ensure members of the bargaining unit are paid at the appropriate rate from the applicable effective dates.

c) City Council Representative

- No report.

d) Library Advancement Committee

- Jen Wilczek is the new Chair of the Library Advancement Committee.
- The Terms of Reference will be reviewed at the next meeting.
- There was a discussion held on the proper function and role of the committee. The goal is for this to be a fundraising committee assists in generating internal revenue and raising funds for specific projects.
- The Art Project proposal was discussed.
- The Digital Art Project and deck renovation projects were also discussed as possible fundraising projects.
- Board input is being solicited on the way forward for the work of the committee.

e) Governance Committee

- Financial Statements were reviewed.
- The Terms of Reference were reviewed and no changes were needed at this time.
- A discussion took place on banking services. The committee is in support of the library looking into other banking options due to the rise in fees and service concerns.
- The 2023 Financial Statements were also reviewed.

f) Local History Committee

- A meeting was held last week and the plans for the Jeanne Clarke Awards were shared with Vash.
- Paul will schedule a meeting for the first week of March so that the Jeanne Clarke Awards reception can be recapped and any improvements can be identified for future years.

g) Friends of the Library

- Jenne Amell did not attend the last meeting.
- A couple of members have stepped up to take the place of Larry who has been organizing book donations for book sales over the past several years. The Library Director has met them and arranged for them to receive FOBs to access the storage room and to get keys for the C-Cans where the books are stored after they are sorted.
- They have decided to move forward and use the Zeffy platform to manage their membership database.
- They are preparing for the April book sale.
- A question arose regarding if a senior library staff member will be regularly attending Friends of the Library meetings. Kyanna Coe, Manager of Finance & Facilities, has attended the last few meetings but was not recorded in the minutes as being in attendance. Jenne will inform the Friends of the Library.
- A link to the current Code of Conduct for the library will be forwarded to the Friends of the Library. The Library Director will be reviewing the current Code of Conduct to see if there are any updates needed.

h) NCLF Board

- The AGM will be held in-person in Prince George in April 2024.

i) BCLTA

- They will be meeting bi-monthly. The next meeting will be in March.
- They have self based learning tools on their website for diversity and inclusion and indigenous awareness.
- Jen Wilczek attended one of their workshops this week. She attended Board Essential Rules and Responsibilities for Library Trustees.
- They are hoping to offer more courses in the future.

6. DISCUSSION/DECISION ITEMS

a) Approval of Financial Statements December 31, 2023 and January 31, 2024

- The Financial Statements were reviewed.

Motion: That the Library Board approve the Financial Statements for December 31, 2023 as recommended by the Governance Committee. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.

Motion: That the Library Board approve the Financial Statements for January 31, 2024 as recommended by the Governance Committee. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.

b) Jeanne Clarke Awards Reception

- Kathleen Angelski and Liz Hannah did a great job stepping in and organizing the event in the absence of Jen Rubadeau.
- Over 100 people attended the event.
- It was very well received.
- Clarence Boudreau was the winner of the Service Award. He was able to attend the event with different generations of his family.
- 4 or 5 of the nominees were in attendance, including the winner. The winner gave a beautiful speech. The royalties from her book are being given to an Indigenous group who provided a grant to write the book.
- Thank you to Vash for his support during the event.
- Heather Henderson, who is Jeanne Clarke's daughter, participated as a reading volunteer and agreed to be a part of the ceremony on the night of the event. She presented a great speech about her mother.

c) Fundraising Activities of the Library Advancement Committee

- The history of the fundraising activities of the Library Advancement Committee, including the Art Strategy Project, was reviewed and discussed by board members.
- The Board Chair feels that the committee should maintain a fundraising focus and that there should be a tangible goal that the board is working towards to support the library in generating internal revenue.
- The deck is an ideal way to increase the usable space in the branch without having to increase the footprint of the building, but the deck railings need to be upgraded to make the area safe for people to use. This could be a collaborative opportunity between the library and the municipality, with capital funding from the City combined with board fundraising to help beautify the space.
- Library management is considering other ways of supporting fundraising, including relying on the kind of “tap to donate” initiatives featured in other libraries.
- Vash suggested that a coffee shop could be a great addition to the library for bringing in patrons and building community partnerships. Also, the renovation of the deck space may be an opportunity to partner with the Lheidli T’enneh.
- Board members are encouraged to offer other additional feedback and suggestions by email or by speaking to Paul, once they have had some time to reflect on the discussion.

7. OTHER/NEW BUSINESS (SCHEDULE/ASSIGN TO COMMITTEE)

a) Committee Meetings for March

- Library Advancement – March 12th at 12:00 p.m.
- Local History Committee – March 7th at 7:00 p.m.
- Governance Committee – March 19th at 4:30 p.m.
- Board Meeting – March 27, 2024 at 6:30 p.m. (Trustee Development at 6:30 p.m.)

b) Board Look Ahead

- No new items.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: That the Library Board adjourn the library board meeting at 8:05 p.m. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.



Paul Burry
Library Director



Jenne Amell
Vice Chair