

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PRINCE GEORGE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD  
HELD WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 24, 2024 AT 6:30 PM  
KEITH GORDON ROOM AT BOB HARKINS/ONLINE VIA ZOOM**

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Present: Anna Duff (Chair)  
Jenne Amell (Vice Chair)  
Kirsten Thomson  
Rahim Somani  
Jen Wilczek  
Andrea Palmer  
Vash Ebbadi-Cook

Also Present: Paul Burry (Library Director)

Regrets: Erin Anderlini  
Councillor Garth Frizzell

**6:30 p.m. Education Session**

Library Trustee Orientation Presentation by Paul Burry, Library Director

**1. CALL TO ORDER AND LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

- The meeting was called to order at 7:10 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.
- Board members shared brief introductions and welcomed the two new board members, Vash Ebbadi-Cook and Andrea Palmer.

**2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING MINUTES**

**Motion: That the Library Board approve the minutes of the November 30, 2023 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 January 24, 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

- To keep board meeting times on schedule, proposed a time limit of 3 to 5 minutes for regular reports and presentations. Those who feel that they need longer are encouraged to supplement their presentation with a written report in advance of the meeting.
- Through December and January, the Board Chair has focused on two specific items. One was a request to City Council to approve the library’s plan to pursue agreements with the Regional District and Lheidli T’enneh that would add a new board member from each of the two local governments to be added to the Library Board. The request was approved by Council on January 8, 2024.
- Anna helped library staff prepare the budget presentation to City Council. She was unable to attend the presentation in person.
- Last week Anna attended the Governance Committee meeting.
- Anna was online and visiting the CKPG news website when she came across two library news articles that were posted back to back. One was regarding City Council allowing the library to add the two additional board members and the other was on the Winter Blues campaign.

##### 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.

- Our “Pet a Puppy” event was held in partnership with St. John’s Ambulance Therapy Dog Program on January 20<sup>th</sup> at the Bob Harkins Branch. The event was attended by 3 dogs and 149 people. PGPL is working with St. John’s to make this program regularly available at the library in 2024.
- PGPL partnered with REAPS and BC Hydro to present a session on improving energy efficiency, as part of the “It’s Easy Being Green” program series.
- The library’s Website Committee has created and shared an online survey to solicit input from the community regarding planned upgrades to the library website.

###### **Expanding our Reach**

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

- The new “Learn to Dance Bhangra” program led by community expert Jagdeep Kaur started in early January.
- The “Queer Connection Movie Night” was held on January 18<sup>th</sup> at the Bob Harkins Branch. The program was hosted in partnership with Northern BC Queer Connection Society, and attracted 11 attendees to the event.
- Community Engagement Library Assistant Sarah Wildi led a number of December programs aimed at an intergenerational audience, including Jingle Bell Rock, Dandy Doodles, and Holiday Letter Writing. These events encourage participants of all ages to connect and learn from each other
- PGPL’s “Beginner’s Spanish for Travellers” and “Spanish Conversation Club,” hosted in partnership with the Prince George Latino Association, are being offered in January and February. The program welcomed 18 participants on its first offering.
- Our “Winter Blues” promotional campaign launched last week, highlighting the full complement of library collections, programs, and services available to library patrons. The mailout portion of this initiative was sent to every household in the library’s service area, over 31,000 unique addresses. In addition to the mailout we are running the same campaign message at bus shelters, outdoor digital billboards, and on radio, TV, social media and online digital ads. The goal of the campaign is to introduce the library to new patrons, welcome back former patrons, and showcase, even to existing patrons, how the wide array of services, collections, and programs PGPL offers can help them read, connect, and share.

### **Developing Partnerships & Advocacy**

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

- The 2024 Library Operations Budget was presented to municipal council on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. Council members expressed their support and appreciation for the work that PGPL does in the community. A decision on the budget will be forthcoming from council by the end of the week.
- PGPL is partnering with Prince George Regional Kerala Cultural Association (PGRKCA) to host a Malayalam Language School program on Saturdays at the Nechako Branch.
- Paul met with George Davison of the Prince George Heritage Commission on December 5<sup>th</sup> to discuss the potential for partnering together to organize and promote heritage activities and events in our community.
- Manager of Communications & Engagement and her team submitted two grant applications to support a six-month Reconciliation art project in 2024. PGPL will be once again be partnering with the Legacy of Hope Foundation to bring the *Youth on Reconciliation – Imagine a Canada* exhibit to PGPL for the month of September. The companion art project being planned invites school children from our community to submit their own Reconciliation-themed artistic creations, asking them to also “Imagine a Canada.” Groups of students will then visit the library throughout the month of September to view the exhibit, participate in Indigenous-themed workshops, and celebrate their own artistic contributions to the display.

- Paul has agreed to serve an additional 2-year term on the Board of the Association of BC Public Library Directors (ABCPLD), in his role of Secretary/Treasurer.

### **Designing Welcoming Spaces**

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

- PGPL is partnering with the City of Prince George and other downtown organizations to support and promote the “Be Downtown” advocacy campaign that launched in early January.
- The library’s phone system has been malfunctioning and only intermittently reliable for the last few weeks. Fortunately, work began in the fall to compare potential vendors and obtain quotes for upgrading the phone system. A new phone system has been ordered and will be installed early in February.
- The new HVAC system installed at the Nechako Branch experienced a failure on January 13<sup>th</sup>, which disabled the heating at the facility during the extreme cold temperatures experienced in Prince George that week. On Monday January 15, the heat had not been restored and the temperature at the branch had dropped to 8° C. On Tuesday the HVAC was repaired and the heat was working properly, however the cold temperatures had caused a water pipe to burst in the staff washroom and a large area of the facility was flooded with water. The damage was cleaned up and the branch reopened to the public the following day, on Wednesday January 17<sup>th</sup>.

### **Strengthening Staff Communications & Relationships**

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

- The library’s new HR/Payroll System HUMI has been tested and configured and the first payroll was processed by PGPL staff during the last week of December. The transition from shared municipal services for HR and benefit administration tasks has been completed.
- PGPL hosted the Joint CUPE/Management Committee Meeting at the library on January 15<sup>th</sup>. This provided an opportunity to recognize the new CUPE representatives participating on the committee, Laura Weisgarber (Unit Chair), and Marty James (2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President).
- A number of new people joined the PGPL team in December & January. Our new Homework Help Tutors Khushi Brahmhatt and Isabelle Côté started in early December. Muntasina Yeana, Leyla St-Denis and Harmanjeet Singh have joined PGPL as Library Service Pages. In addition, former Pages Chris Stafford and Hassan Ahmadian have both been promoted to Customer Experience Assistants, and Bethany Webster has been promoted from Technical Services Assistant to Library Assistant – Collections.

#### c) City Council Representative

- No report.

d) Library Advancement Committee

- No meetings were held in December or January.

e) Governance Committee

- There were no financial statements available to be approved at this meeting as year end is currently in progress.
- The policy on family working together was reviewed and now includes grandparents and grandchildren so that it aligns with the BC Employment Standards Act.
- The policy on criminal records check renewals and the purchasing policy were both reviewed as well.
- The Terms of Reference for the committee were reviewed. They were tabled until a future meeting.
- Paul shared a comprehensive Trustee Education and Development Plan.

f) Local History Committee

- No meeting was held.

g) Friends of the Library

- There was an AGM that resulted in some change in roles and points of contact. Edel is still the President, Lila is VP, Effie is the Treasurer and Jordan Barrett is the new secretary and will be the contact person for Jenne.
- Lila will be taking over of the duties that were previously done by Margaret Johnston. She will be looking after book sales, media contact and the book storage contract.
- The Friends are working on a Code of Conduct for their volunteers and had inquired about whether the library had any documents or resources that they could use.

h) NCLF Board

- No Update.

i) BCLTA

- Has Trustee education and resources.
- There will be workshops that Trustees can register for.
- They have refined their meeting times so that their meetings run efficiently and on time.
- They have transitioned the financial statements to a new user-friendly template.
- The website is being redesigned.
- Jenne will forward the newsletter to Trustees and then you will be able to sign up to receive the newsletter directly.
- There will be positions available on the executive so if anyone is interested they can talk to Jenne directly.

## 6. DISCUSSION/DECISION ITEMS

### a) Election of Chair and Vice Chair of the Board

- Kirsten Thomson nominated Anna Duff as Chair of the Board. Anna accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Anna is the successful candidate by acclamation.
- Jennifer Wilczek nominated Jenne Amell as Vice Chair of the Board. Jenne accepted the nomination. There being no other nominations, Jenne is the successful candidate by acclamation.

### b) 2024 Committee Assignments

- Governance Committee – Anna Duff (Chair), Rahim Somani, Kirsten Thomsen, Andrea Palmer
- Library Advancement Committee – Erin Anderlini, Jen Wilczek, Andrea Palmer, Vash Ebbadi-Cook
- Local History Committee – Garth Frizzell, Andrea Palmer, Vash Ebbadi-Cook
- Friends of the Library Liaison – Jenne Amell, Garth Frizzell
- North Central Library Association Representative – Kirsten Thomsen, Vash Ebbadi-Cook

### c) Trustee Education & Development Plan

- The Trustee Education & Development Plan for 2024 that was presented to the Governance Committee was reviewed by the Board.

### d) Council Approval of Board Request Regarding Pursuing Agreements with LTFN & RDFFG

- Councillor Garth Frizzell shared the letter from the Library Board with the members of the Intergovernmental Affairs standing committee that he chairs, to request approval for the library to pursue agreements with Lheidli T'enneh First Nation (LTFN) and the Regional District of Fraser Fort George (RDFFG) that would permit each of the two local governments to add an additional trustee to the Library Board.
- This item was brought forth a year ago by previous Board Chair, Mike Gagel, who identified the barrier that people who were from Lheidli T'enneh First Nations and the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George were not eligible to sit on the library board despite being eligible for library services. A letter from the library board was brought forth to City Council requesting approval of entering into a written agreement to cooperate in provision of library services with the RDFFG and LTFN for the appoint of one member each to the library board as permitted by section 48 of the BC Library Act. This was approved by Council.
- The next step will be to approach LTFN and RDFFG to share this plan with them. They will be asked to appoint their own representative.
- Paul, Anna and Jen Rubadeau will continue working on this and Memos of Understanding will be written up.

e) Jeanne Clarke Awards for Local History

- This event will take place Sunday, February 25<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.
- The library will be closed during this event.
- Jen Rubadeau and her team are doing all of the planning for the event.
- There will be an award winner in the Service category and the Publication category.
- An in-camera session will be held to vote on the recommended award winners.

f) 2024 Budget Presentation to Council

- Paul and Jen made the budget presentation to council on January 22<sup>nd</sup>. The presentation was well received by Council.
- Some items from the presentation were reviewed by board members.
- The budget was approved by council with the full amount that was requested.

g) Update to Policy 6.3 Employment Process

- The updates to Policy 6.3 Employment Process were reviewed.

**Motion: That the Library Board approve the updates to policy 6.3 Employment Process as recommended by the Governance Committee. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.**

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

a) Committee Meetings for February

- Library Advancement – February 13<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 p.m.
- Local History Committee – February 6<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m.
- Governance Committee – February 20<sup>th</sup> at 4:30 p.m.
- Board Meeting – February 28, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

b) Board Look Ahead

- Jeanne Clarke Awards on February 25<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in the Keith Gordon room at the Bob Harkins Branch.
- Paul will send out invitations to board members if there are events that in the next month that members would be encouraged to attend.

**8. ADJOURNMENT**

**Motion: That the Library Board move in-camera at 8:39 p.m. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.**



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**Paul Burry**  
**Library Director**



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**Anna Duff**  
**Chair**