

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PRINCE GEORGE PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD
HELD WEDNESDAY JANUARY 22, 2025 AT 6:30 PM
KEITH GORDON ROOM AT BOB HARKINS/ONLINE VIA ZOOM**

Present: Anna Duff (Chair)
Jenne Amell (Vice Chair)
Jenn Wilczek
Rahim Somani
Vash Ebbadi-Cook
Sonia Sidhu
Luke Spooner
Joseph Jeffery

Also Present: Paul Burry (Library Director)
Larissa Clotildes (Manager of Communications & Engagement)

Regrets: Councillor Garth Frizzell
Councillor Wendy Jael

6:30 pm 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.
- Joseph Jeffery shared a territorial acknowledgement of the unceded traditional lands of the Lheidli T'enneh people.

2. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS BOARD MEETING MINUTES

Motion: That the Library Board approve the minutes of the November 20, 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 January 22, 2025 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 & Paul presented the 2025 Library Operations Budget to Prince George Mayor and Council members on January 20th, 2025. They also did an interview for a media story with the Prince George Citizen on January 22nd to provide some context for the issues raised by council members during the budget presentation.
- Anna suggested that the board start thinking right away about how to prepare the budget presentation for next year.
- Anna & Paul met with representatives of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George (RDFFG) on January 17th to review and discuss the draft Cooperation Agreement. A number of proposed amendments to the draft document were agreed upon and the RDFFG is updating the draft to incorporate the revisions.
- Anna met with Lheidli T'enneh councillor and new library trustee Wendy Jael as part of a media story for CKPG highlighting Wendy joining the library board as the new standing board member appointed by Lheidli T'enneh Chief & Council. The story was published January 24th.
- Anna completed the Branding Engagement session with Splash Media representatives in January.
- Anna met with Paul and new Manager of Communications & Engagement Larissa Clotildes on January 10th for an update on things happening at the library.

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.

- PGPL's Brand Development & Website Design projects launched in December, with the Leadership Team visiting Splash Media to participate in a Brand Discovery Session. Public engagement sessions launched January 15th.
- The Overdrive digital collection of magazines, audiobooks and ebooks is now available to access directly from the library's online catalogue, with the goal of streamlining the process and reducing user frustration from long wait times for Overdrive content. Digital borrowing in 2024 increased by 20% over 2023.

Expanding our Reach

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

- The 2025 story time program series began on January 11th with the “Daddy and Me” program. The program welcomed 50 children and their male caregivers.
- There were 48 participants at the “Deck the Halls Stuffy Sleepover” at the Bob Harkins Branch on December 19th.
- The “Khui Dakelh Scavenger Hunt” passive program in November & December reached 156 people at the Bob Harkins Branch, and 80 people at the Nechako Branch.
- PGPL celebrated the start of 2025 with the “New Year’s Boogie on December 30th at the Bob Harkins Branch. The “Itty Bitty Boogie” for children under 5 was attended by 149 people. The all ages “Big Boogie” attracted 138 participants.
- The “Art Lab” crafting program held on January 15th at the Bob Harkins Branch attracted 52 participants.

Developing Partnerships & Advocacy

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

- Paul is participating as a Learning Guide for the LLEAD7 Library Leadership Development Program, helping to support and mentor staff members of library and information organizations from around Canada. The program launched on November 25th with a week-long intensive residency at Loon Lake Lodge in Maple Ridge, BC. PGPL staff member Larissa Clotildes is one of the learners in the LLEAD7 program.
- Paul and Board Chair Anna Duff met with Maureen Connelly and Chris Calder of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, to discuss the draft Cooperation Agreement with RDEFG.
- Paul and Anna presented PGPL’s 2025 Operations Budget to Prince George city council on January 20th.

Designing Welcoming Spaces

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

- The stairwell display at the Bob Harkins Branch for the month of December once again showcased the artwork of PGPL staff members. The month of January will feature the paintings of the student artists of art teacher Ati Reza of the Create Art Studio.
- The Bob Harkins Branch continues to enjoy busy attendance on Sunday afternoons. Since resuming Sunday openings at the branch at the beginning of November 2024, the branch is averaging 200 visits each Sunday. The facility is open from 12-4 pm on Sundays.

Strengthening Staff Communications & Relationships

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

- The PGPL Staff Development & Appreciation Day was held on December 2nd. A photo slideshow shared during the event highlighted the many achievements and contributions of library staff in 2024! Alexis Redenbach from the Mobile Response Team and Jennifer Attree from Splash Media presented information sessions at the event.
- The Joint CUPE-Management Committee Meeting was held December 19th at the library.
- Community Engagement Librarian Larissa Clotildes was the successful candidate for the position of Manager of Communications & Engagement. Larissa will be taking on the role for a 6-month term while Jen Rubadeau is on extended leave.
- The library has launched a safe ride home program, providing free taxi fare for staff to get home from the library after closing time. The program supports staff who stay past the end of their shift and have missed their transit connection, ensuring that they are able to get home safely.
- Manager of Finance & Facilities Kyanna Coe is taking some maternity leave and will be away from the library until July. Operations Manager Lyoshi LaMair's temporary contract has been extended and she has assumed the Manager of Finance & Facilities role to cover Kyanna's absence. PGPL is also contracting with an accounting consultant to assist with the year-end and financial audit processes.

c) City Council Representative

- No Report

d) Library Advancement Committee

- No meeting in January

e) Governance Committee

- No meeting in January

f) Local History Committee

- Anna provided an update on the planning process for the upcoming Jeanne Clarke Local History Awards, scheduled for February 23rd, 2025.
- Chuck Chin will be honoured as the winner of the Service Award. An exhibit of Chuck's photography will be staged in the stairwell at the Bob Harkins Branch during the month of February. A media release promoting the exhibit and the awards was issued January 21st.

g) Friends of the Library

- Jenne provided an update regarding the Friends of the Library (FOTL).

- A motion was adopted at the last FOTL meeting to appoint a Receiving Officer to act as the point of contact for receiving donations for book sales. Alan Kavanaugh has been appointed in this role for a one year term. He will be developing a policy for accepting donated materials.
- FOTL memberships and maintaining privacy protections on members' personal information were topics of discussion.
- There was discussion of requesting that the library provide pgpl.ca email addresses for FOTL board members, however this is unfortunately not possible because the FOTL are a separate charitable organization and it would create confusion regarding what constitutes official PGPL communications.
- With Kyanna Coe on extended leave, Larissa Clotildes has taken on the role of staff liaison for the FOTL.
- The FOTL board will be joining the library board at the February 26th board meeting for the photography session at 6:30 pm.

h) NCLF Board

- Paul will connect with NCLF Executive Director Abi Ward to ensure that their plans to host their next in-person meeting are integrated into the Beyond Hope Conference planning process.

i) BCLTA

- Anna met with the BCLTA Board in January, which included meeting the new interim Executive Director Christine Middlemass. Plans are underway for the upcoming Spring AGM.
- Anna is a member of the Special Resolutions ad-hoc committee of the board.
- A town hall meeting is being planned for BCLTA members, to discuss possible resolutions to be considered for proposal at the upcoming Spring AGM.

6. DISCUSSION/DECISION ITEMS

a) Election of 2025 Board Chair and Vice-Chair

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

b) 2025 Committee Assignments

- The committee and liaison roles were reviewed and assignments updated.
- Governance Committee: Anna Duff (Chair), Rahim Somani, Joseph Jeffery, Luke Spooner
- Library Advancement Committee: Jenn Wilczek (Chair), Vash Ebbadi-Cook, Sonia Sidhu, Luke Spooner
- Local History Committee: Anna Duff (Chair), Vash Ebbadi-Cook, Garth Frizzell, Jenne Amell
- Friends of the Library Liaison: Jenne Amell, Garth Frizzell (alternate)

- North Central Library Federation Board Representative: Vash Ebbadi-Cook, Sonia Sidhu (alternate), Joseph Jeffery (alternate)

c) Update on Board Agreements with LTFN and RDFFG

- Lheidli T'enneh councillor Wendy Jael has been appointed to the Library Board for a 2-year term by Lheidli T'enneh First Nation, following the signing of the Cooperation Agreement between LTFN and PGPL.
- Anna and Paul met with Maureen Connelly and Chris Calder of the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, to discuss the draft Cooperation Agreement with RDFFG. There was some discussion of how to incorporate an accurate description of the geographical area covered by the agreement, since the RDFFG includes areas that are outside the service area of PGPL. Maureen and Chris will revise the draft agreement and send it back to PGPL for further discussion.
- RDFFG Board members are still considering whether the library board member they appoint will be an elected representative or a community member.
- There was discussion regarding how the annual meetings mentioned in the "Accountability" section of the agreement might take place in practice, including the idea of PGPL making an annual presentation at a regular meeting of the RDFFG Board of Directors similar to the annual report presentation to municipal council.

d) Jeanne Clarke Awards for Local History

- Anna provided an update on the planning for the upcoming Jeanne Clarke awards ceremony, scheduled for February 23rd at the Prince George Conference & Civic Centre. Anna will be acting as Master of Ceremonies for the event. Photographer Chuck Chin will be honoured as the Service Award winner.
- Plans for the event include looking for ways to use the opportunity provided by the 40th anniversary of the awards to highlight the important role of the public library in making large community celebrations like this possible.
- Planning includes trying to incorporate past nominees and winners into the event in various ways.
- The board discussed whether the publication award winner should be notified in advance of the event, so that they can plan to attend in person and invite friends and family members. There was general agreement that this idea should be pursued. Paul will notify the winner right away so that travel arrangements can be made, if necessary.
- An in-camera session will be held to vote on the recommended publication award winner.

e) 2025 Budget Presentation to Council

- Garth sent a message during the board meeting to confirm that the library's proposed budget was approved by council as presented. The vote was 5-4 to approve the budget.
- The board discussed the budget presentation to council, and how to prepare for future presentations. After the presentation, council members had questions about the loss of internal revenue from the elimination of late fees in 2021, and the failure to replace that internal revenue source with other sources that would offset the municipality's funding burden.

- One thing we could focus on in future budget presentations is providing comparative metrics that quantify the value of the library's programs and services in a way that highlights the financial benefits, as well as the other benefits we focus on that are harder to quantify.
- Another option discussed was incorporating input from community members, with data taken from customer satisfaction surveys or other engagement initiatives.
- Anna suggested that the board include a planning session to develop strategies for the budget presentation to council in the month prior to approving the proposed budget.

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

a) Committee Meetings for December

- Library Advancement Committee – February 11th at 12:00 pm
- Local History Committee – February 5th at 7:00 pm
- Governance Committee – February 18th at 4:30 pm
- Board Meeting – February 26th, 2025 at 6:30 pm (Board Photography Session)

b) Board Look Ahead

- Jeanne Clarke Awards Ceremony, February 23rd at 3:00 pm.
- Paul will send meeting invites by email for board committee meetings.

8. ADJOURNMENT

Motion: That the Library Board adjourn the Board meeting at 8:39 pm. The motion was moved and seconded. The motion was carried.



Paul Burry
Library Director



Anna Duff
Chair