

RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

REGULAR MEETING

Wednesday, February 25, 2015

Present: Simon Tang, Chair
Susan Koch, Vice Chair (arrived at 5:50)
Mark Bostwick
Kash Chahal
Traci Corr
Diane Cousar
Peter Kafka
Robin Leung
Alexa Loo, Alternate Council Liaison (left at 6:30)

Greg Buss, Chief Librarian and Secretary to the Board
Susan Walters, Deputy Chief Librarian

Regrets: Chak Au, Council Liaison

ACTION

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 5:30pm.

Simon introduced and welcomed Councillor Alexa Loo.

2. Approval of Agenda

MOVED: That the agenda be approved.

KAFKA/BOSTWICK.....CARRIED

EDUCATION SESSION

3. (a) An outline of educational session topics was included for information. The Board were encouraged to make suggestions for session topics.

(b) Shelley Civkin presented her report on Freedom to Read Week. This is a national event. Shelley described our request for reconsideration process, how the collection is developed using Automatic Release Programs (ARPs) from our vendors and how staff deal with misuse of library computer resources.

The Board asked if misuse is common. Shelley responded that we have fairly regular complaints in the computer area, with peak complaints during times of high use. Repercussions include a sliding scale of action from blocking the card to asking the customer to leave temporarily to suspending library privileges. Misuse can include customers using their own laptops. If staff notice misuse or other customers complain, staff will speak with the customer. The library must be a safe place for all customers; customers observed accessing inappropriate images or websites will be prevented from doing so.

The Board asked about pre-screening material purchases. Susan noted that vendor ARPs are helpful. Public libraries generally buy popular reading material and books that support lifelong learning for all ages, items that fit in with our buying profile. We don't purchase books on making bombs or hate literature, for example. Vendors are also preselecting in their recommended purchase lists that staff use in collection

development.

The Board asked about requests from customers. Susan noted that we generally purchase if the item fits into our guidelines and would be of interest to other customers.

The Board asked if we track what someone has searched for in our catalogue but didn't find and purchase that. Susan Walters noted that our computer system does not have that capacity but the customer can suggest a purchase and staff are working to promote this service more prominently with our website redesign and new Integrated Library System (ILS).

(Susan Koch arrived at 5:50.)

BUSINESS SECTION

4. Approval of Minutes

MOVED: That the minutes of the regular meeting of January 28, 2015 be approved as presented.

CORR/BOSTWICK.....CARRIED

5. Business Arising

(a) None.

6. Correspondence

(a) A letter dated January 30, 2015 to Richmond Community Foundation re: Investment Income was included.

(b) A letter dated January 30, 2015 to Richmond Community Foundation re: Kronier and Sparrow Donation was included.

(c) A letter dated January 30, 2015 to Kronier and Sparrow was included.

Greg noted that the Kronier family have indicated they would appreciate a recognition tea. Shelley will work with the family to schedule this event.

COMMUNITY

7. Report from Councillor Loo

Councillor Loo reported that Council is in the approval process for the Richmond Children's Art Festival funding, which will affect the library as we are open for that event.

8. Report from the Friends of the Library

Alison Cormack reported that the Friends are working towards their next sale on March 28th. Greg thanked the Friends for their funding efforts and many items their donations purchase. Mark noted that our Friends are very effective compared with other libraries and we are lucky to have such a dedicated team.

(a) A letter dated January 29, 2015 to thank the Friends of the Library for their donation was included.

(b) A letter dated February 6, 2015 to the Vancouver Foundation re: contribution was included.

(c) A letter dated February 6, 2015 to the Richmond Community Foundation re: contribution was included.

9. Customer Comment Forms

A summary of comments was included for information.

BOARD

10. Items for Decision/Discussion

(a) 2015 Budget Approvals

- i. An update on the library's 2015 budget submission to the Finance Committee was included.
- ii. Minutes of the Finance Committee of February 2, 2015 were included.
- iii. An excerpt of minutes of the regular Council meeting of February 10, 2015 was included.
- iv. A Council referral discussion paper regarding a review of library revenue and expenses was included. Greg noted the referral will be going to the Finance Committee in April or May.

The Board asked about the principles behind the referral and noted that our values were determined in the strategic planning process we just completed. Our Strategic Plan is our baseline. Now that we have it, are we able to implement it in an efficient manner? Any negative impact to our budget will have a negative impact on the Strategic Plan.

Greg noted that Council recognizes the library is vital and needs to grow. Council is here to support the library and just did that in a substantial way by increasing this year's budget for books by \$200,000, approving a 3.5% budget increase and funding a mobile computer lab. That won't always happen though. Even with a 3.5% budget increase we had to cut the staff budget in 2015 and we can't keep doing that either. The referral is aimed at investigating how the library can continue to prosper and grow while keeping in mind the tax payers ability to pay.

Greg noted that arenas, pools, community centres and the Oval all charge for use of their services. The library is the only city service that does not charge and this is for important reasons. We are a unique service and that needs to be better communicated. The Library Act helps describe why but we need to do more in explaining why our service is unique and valuable to our community.

The Board noted that the library is a safe place for all citizens and because it does not charge for its services is fully accessible to all sectors of the community. Closing a branch or changing hours to save on expenses has a large negative impact to the community.

The Board discussed revenues such as fines. If we raise the fine, what is the negative impact? The Board asked for data about the loan period and how customers use it. Councillor Loo noted that Council considered "How many people read 10 ebooks in 21 days or 24 books in 4 weeks?", while recognizing that children can go through several books in one visit. Are our loan periods optimal?

Greg indicated that Council has done us a great service by asking us to think about why and how we do what we do, and to think about our service in new ways. Change is necessary as we make the transformation to a blend of print and digital services and implement our Strategic Plan. He indicated we need baseline data and then could see how changes affect customers.

ACTION

The Board noted that it is always possible to spend less, but doing so means we must eliminate some services. They identified two approaches: spend less and decrease services, or raise funds. The Board determined their first priority is to protect the collection and raising funds is the better option.

Greg also noted we can no longer measure success by per capita circulation – a new set of metrics needs to be developed. Councillor Loo noted the per person subsidy for the Oval is similar to ours, so we compare well with that service.

Greg asked Councillor Loo for suggestions on how Council could better understand the scope of the library. Councillor Loo noted stats on attendance by youth, seniors, etc., focussed bullet points and easy to understand numbers are helpful. More visibility on other kinds of engagement including volunteers and youth would help Council see other values of the library.

Councillor Loo left the meeting.

- (b) Appointment of Committees and Representatives. Simon appointed Mark as the InterLINK Representative and Susan as the alternate.

Simon disbanded the Steering Committee on Strategic Planning as the 2015-2018 Strategic Plan is complete.

Simon formed the Fund Development Committee, as a committee of the whole.

Simon appointed Susan to the Audit Committee, with himself as an ex-officio member.

- (c) 2015 Conferences

- i. A schedule of upcoming conferences was included.
- ii. The Board policy on Trustee conference attendance and travel was included. Greg noted that new Trustees must complete the Trustee Orientation Program before attending the BCLA conference. Experienced Trustees attend the local BCLA conference before attending the national CLA or American ALA conferences. The sooner we receive Trustee requests to attend conferences the sooner we can register and take advantage of early bird rates.

- (d) A proposal for a Fund Development Workshop to be held on April 15, 2015 was included.

- (e) A proposal to develop a Board Alumni Group was included. Greg asked the Board to consider if this was something they would like to pursue. This group is proposed as something that would not compete or conflict with the Board or the Friends of the Library, but enhances our work by focussing on community networking, partnerships and fundraising. The Alumni Group will retain the knowledge and experience of former Trustees. Diane noted she is a Gateway Alumni member, a group open to past Chairs only that acts as an advisory group.

The Board noted they support an Alumni Group in principle, if the focus is on Fund Development. Next step: Simon will contact Pat Watson.

Staff: inform InterLINK.

Chair: contact P. Watson

ACTION

INTERLINK**11. InterLINK Report**

- a) A letter dated February 2, 2015 re: InterLINK Operating Budget was included.

Mark reported that InterLINK elected new officers at their February 24 meeting. They also agreed to engage a consultant to review and revise their governance and reporting structure. Another priority is making the existing direct patron request system work better.

BRITISH COLUMBIA LIBRARY TRUSTEE ASSOCIATION**12. British Columbia Library Trustees Association Report**

- a) The BCLTA Bulletin for January 2015 was included.

Peter reported that the Executive Director has resigned and is leaving at the end of May. BCLTA is looking for a candidate with library experience. Peter noted there will be 6 spots available on the BCLTA Board of Directors at the AGM in May. His spot ends then. If anyone is interested they should come forward now. BCLTA looks for Trustees with 3-5 years left in their terms. They meet once a month by phone and twice a year in person, often here in Richmond.

STAFF OPERATIONS**13. Chief Librarian's Verbal Report**

Greg reported that he is assisting the Gateway Theatre selection committee, who are interviewing short listed candidates in March. Greg attended the Richmond Cares/Richmond Gives reception at City Hall. Greg noted that the audit process has begun and we anticipate having audited statements for the April 29 meeting.

14. Program Reports

- (a) Lee Anne Smith's report on large and special event programming was included.
- (b) Melanie Au's report on Richmond Children's Art Festival was included. This year the Family Day event was gated and ticketed. Simon noted he attended the Family Day event which was crowded but not chaotic.
- (c) Melanie Au's report on Spring Break Programming was included.

The Board asked for comparative data for program events like these where we've provided the program in previous years.

15. Project Reports

- (a) The February report on Sierra Migration was included. Mark Ellis reported that stage 2 is nearly complete and gave a brief description of the upcoming stages. Mark reported that Bibliocommons have confirmed they will waive the fee for stage 8, Bibliocommons re-implementation.

The Board asked for timelines to be added to the report. Mark will include after meeting with Innovative Interfaces Inc., who will provide a schedule.

16. Status Reports

- (a) Cathy Gettel's report on 2014 Training and Development Activity was included. This report outlines selected baseline data. The Board asked for key competencies to be included in the next report.

Staff: include comparative data where available.

Staff: Include Sierra implementation schedule.

Staff: include how training supports key competencies.

ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

- 17. The Board group photograph was tentatively booked for Wednesday, April 15, 2015, following the special meeting.
- 18. The 2014 Staff Recognition/Retiree Event is a great opportunity for the Board to recognize long service of Richmond Public Library staff. This event will be held on Wednesday, March 18, 2015 in the Brighthouse staff room.
- 19. The library will purchase 10 tickets for the upcoming Richmond Chinese Community Society dinner on March 5th. Simon will make the presentation.
- 20. A memo from Lee Anne Smith regarding the Library Champion Celebration on March 12th was included. Simon noted he cannot attend this event. Traci indicated she is available.
- 21. A link to the electronic edition of *Feliciter* Vol. 60 No.6 (December 2014) was recently posted on the Board Blog. Links to future editions will be posted when available.
- 22. The Board Calendar and Work Plan were provided for information.

ACTION

- Staff: arrange photographer.
- Staff: Prepare gifts and invite staff.
- Staff: Speaking notes for Simon
- Staff: confirm with Traci
- Staff: Post interview link on Board Blog.

OTHER BUSINESS

Simon and Susan Koch attended the non-fiction awards on February 13th.
 Greg's interviews with Shane Foxman and Rick Cluff are available on the CBC website.
 Simon will contact Chak Au to confirm attendance and scheduling Alternate if necessary.

NEXT MEETING

The next Board meeting is scheduled on **Wednesday, April 1, 2015 at 5:30 p.m.**

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the Chair declared the meeting adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

CHAIR 

CHIEF LIBRARIAN 