



PRLS Board Meeting Minutes

September 14, 2023

The regular meeting of the Parkland Regional Library System Board was called to order at 10:02 a.m. on Thursday September 14, 2023 in the Combined Board Room, Lacombe.

Present: Teresa Rilling (Board Chair), Doug Booker, Deb Coombes, Jaime Coston, Edna Coulter, Teresa Cunningham, Cal David, Richard Forsberg, Elaine Fossen, Dwayne Fulton, Clark German, Barb Gilliat, Pam Hansen, Connie Hueslman, Rick Manning (undeclared alternate for Jeff Eckstrand), Joy-Anne Murphy, Jackie Northey, Leonard Phillips, Ray Reckseidler, Bill Rock, Diane Roth, Deb Smith, Les Stulberg, Michelle Swanson, Delaney Thoreson, Doug Weir, Carlene Wetthuhn, Shannon Wilcox, Darren Wilson, Bill Windsor, Janice Wing, Patricia Young

With Regrets: Alison Barker-Jevne, Amanda Derksen, Barbara Gibson, Twyla Hale, Kathy Hall, Cody Hillmer, Dana Kreil, Gord Lawlor, Julie Maplethorpe, Ricci Matthews, Marc Mousseau, Shawn Peach, Norma Penney, Pat Toone

Absent: Jul Bissell, Jeff Eckstrand, Michael Hildebrandt, Stephen Levy, Sandy Shipton

Staff: Hailey Halberg, Kara Hamilton, Andrea Newland, Ron Sheppard, Donna Williams

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:02 a.m. by Teresa Rilling.

As part of PRLS' legislative compliance procedures, board members who send regrets are excused at the beginning of each meeting.

Motion by Pam Hansen to excuse Alison Barker-Jevne, Amanda Derksen, Barbara Gibson, Twyla Hale, Kathy Hall, Cody Hillmer, Dana Kreil, Gord Lawlor, Julie Maplethorpe, Ricci Matthews, Marc Mousseau, Shawn Peach, Norma Penney, and Pat Toone from attendance at the board meeting on September 14, 2023 and remain members of the Parkland Board in good standing.

CARRIED

PRLS 38/2023

Shannon Wilcox entered the meeting at 10:06 a.m.

1.1 Agenda

1.1.2 Adoption of the Agenda

Rilling asked if there were any additions or deletions to the agenda. There were none.



Motion by Len Phillips to accept the agenda as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 39/2023

Rick Manning entered the meeting at 10:13 a.m.

1.2. Approval of Minutes

Rilling asked if there were any amendments to the May 18, 2023 minutes. There were none.

Motion by Ray Reckseidler to approve the minutes of the May 18, 2023 meeting as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 40/2023

1.3. Business arising from the minutes of the February 23, 2023 meeting

Rilling asked if there was any business arising from the minutes. There was none.

2. Business Arising from the Consent Agenda

Rilling asked if there was any business arising from the consent agenda. There was none.

Motion by Barb Gilliat to approve the consent agenda as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 41/2023

3.1. Parkland 2024 Budget

Sheppard reviewed Parkland's 2024 proposed budget. For 2024, there is a 43-cent increase to the municipal per capita requisition to \$9.18. This increase was mandated by the Parkland Executive Committee at their March 16th meeting.

Provincial grants amount to approximately 43.3% of PRLS' total income.

Parkland held the municipal requisition at \$8.55 per capita for three consecutive years with an increase in 2023 to \$8.75 per capita to deal with inflationary pressures.

For calculating the municipal levy for 2023, Parkland will be using the Population Estimates and Projections supplied by the Office of Statistics and Information at Alberta Treasury Board and Finance.

The budget was built around the assumption that the government of Alberta operating grant will remain at \$4.75 per capita and based on 2019 population statistics. Likewise, staff assume the rural library services grant will remain at \$5.60 per capita and based on 2019 population statistics.

Most expense lines of the budget remain stable, with increases reflecting inflationary costs.



Some board members indicated concern over increasing cost and believe Parkland should advocate that the Government of Alberta adjust library grants annually to address inflation.

Motion by Joy-Anne Murphy to advocate to the government that the GOA provide annual cost of living increases in the future as well as cost of living catch up funding for library operating grants.

CARRIED
PRLS 42/2023

Motion by Bill Rock to approve the Parkland Regional Library System 2024 budget as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 43/2023 (3 opposed)

Which population figures Parkland uses for invoicing municipalities was brought up again. Board members agreed to discuss and decide at their November meeting whether Parkland shall change their member agreement.

Motion by Joy-Anne Murphy for the Executive Committee to explore the implications of aligning the population figures used by Parkland for invoicing the municipalities with those used by the Government of Alberta for issuing public library operating grants.

CARRIED
PRLS 44/2023 (4 opposed)

3.2 Reserve Transfers

Donna Williams reviewed. At their June 15th meeting, the Executive Committee re-allocated 2022's surplus to replenish three of Parkland's reserves so they align with minimum levels required by board policy. Those reserves were the Vehicle, Building, and Technology reserves. In June, following the approval of Parkland's 2022 audit, the Unrestricted Reserve, where Parkland's surpluses are recorded, was valued at \$425,314.91.

The Vehicle Reserve received a \$100,000 top-up, the Building Reserve, \$25,000, and the Technology Reserve \$200,000.

Parkland only replenishes its reserves through budget surpluses.

Motion by Edna Coulter to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 45/2023

3.3 Compensation Policy Working Group

Sheppard reviewed. The Compensation Policy Working Group held their first meeting on August 29th.



Recommendations made by the group include:

- a) Parkland should use a blended 5-year COLA
- b) New hires should receive step increases on their hire anniversary date, with existing staff grandfathered – keeping January as their anniversary for step increases.
- c) Part time employees will reach their next step based on hours worked, using 75% of the annual hours of a full-time employee.
- d) Steps should be considered guaranteed, while COLA increases should be offered if the budget allows.
- e) If COLA becomes optional, there is an increased chance of the salary grid no longer reflecting the labour market. For this reason, Parkland's Compensation Policy should require an external examination of the grid every three, rather than every five, years.
- f) If COLA becomes optional, staff retention could be affected since it will be long serving staff who are the most likely to see a diminution of their salary once they reach the end of the grid.
- g) Also discussed was an option if Parkland is having trouble hiring: add a "market modifier" to the new hire's salary. The market modifier is a temporary salary modifier used in exceptional situations when it is demonstrated that a higher salary, beyond the maximum of the assigned classification, is critical to attract or retain employees. Application of a market modifier is to address a considerable market gap with compensation for comparable position. The market modifier could be left in place until the salary grid is reviewed.

For the next meeting, staff will prepare a series of excel spreadsheets with the 2024 grid, including the number of staff members on each step, to allow the working group to experiment with different scenarios for reducing the grid.

The committee is planning to meet again at the beginning of October for a full day.

Motion by Ray Reckseidler to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 46/2023

3.4. IT Report

A written report was submitted. Of note, the website team continues to work diligently with Parkland's website developer Fishtank Consulting Corp. Over the summer months they experienced some challenges that have delayed the launch of Parkland's new websites throughout the region. The launch is now expected to be near the end of October or early November. That said, the team is very pleased with how the project is proceeding.

It is of note that Parkland is the first region in Alberta to have accessibility programming in its website.



Motion by Deb Coombes to receive the IT Report for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 47/2023

3.5. Community Services Recovery Fund

Ron Sheppard explained the history of Parkland's application for \$200,000 in funding from the Community Service Recovery Fund to offset costs for PRLS' website refresher project. The Community Services Recovery Fund is a \$400 million investment from the Government of Canada to support charities and non-profits as they focus on how to adapt their organizations for pandemic recovery.

Unfortunately, Parkland was unsuccessful in obtaining the grant. No particular reason was given.

Motion by Shannon Wilcox to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRL 48/2023

3.6. Nordegg Library Move

Andrea Newland reviewed the Nordegg Library move. The hamlet of Nordegg has been gaining popularity over the past few years. The library, in turn, has also noticed an increase in usage and interest from the community. It was quickly recognized that they were outgrowing their existing space and needed to move.

Clearwater County provided the Nordegg Library with the opportunity to move into the same building as the local museum. Extensive renovations took place and new shelving was designed and built locally. Library volunteers weeded, packed and moved all the materials during the summer months. On September 2nd, in conjunction with Nordegg Days, the library officially re-opened to the public. Over the two-day celebration of Nordegg Days, 200+ people toured the new library space. The library raffled off prizes to community members of all ages. It was a spectacular weekend.

Many of the library volunteers were on hand to welcome the community back into the library. The library was unofficially re-named the Rolf & Cheri Adolph Library to recognize the many years of contributions from Rolf Adolph and his wife Cheri.

Motion by Michelle Swanson to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRL 49/2023

3.7. Indigenous Services

Andrea Newland reviewed. Parkland has been working hard to build relationships and increase services to Indigenous communities over the past few years. With the OROS (On Reserve, On Settlement) grant provided by the Government of Alberta, Parkland has been able to accomplish numerous initiatives.



PRLS now has two women from the community of Maskwacis employed at the library. Staff took photos of intricate beading designed and created bookmarks for the library.

Staff will be commissioning a local Indigenous artist this fall to paint murals on the walls of the library.

For the first time since the library officially opened in 2019, the library will now be open to the public Monday through Friday.

Colette Poitras (Indigenous Public Library Services Advisor) and Keri Anderson from the Public Library Services Branch visited the library on September 13th. They were extremely impressed with the little library.

There are plans to purchase more shelving for Maskwacis and increase the size of the collection. Additionally, the staff in Maskwacis will also be attending the Stronger Together conference in November in Edmonton where they will be able to network with other Library Managers.

PRLS selected this library to be featured in a TAL (The Alberta Library) sponsored project highlighting rural libraries in partnership with the CBC. The date of the CBC interview is yet to be determined.

In addition, the First Nations community of O'Chiese recently received a cheque from Parkland for \$20,000 to assist in developing a library in their community. Their vision is to offer literacy programming such as Elders story readings to the youth in the health centre tipi, book clubs, early years story time, and educational sessions.

Motion by Joy-Anne Murphy to receive for information.

CARRIED

PRL 50/2023

3.8. Marketing and Advocacy Committee Report

Ron Sheppard spoke to the Advocacy Report. Parkland's Advocacy Committee has met once since the May board meeting.

For over a year now, the primary efforts of the Advocacy Committee were to achieve an increase in provincial operating funding for public libraries. This was achieved prior to the recent election. Three million dollars in new funding has been provided for operating grants. This has resulted in a five-cent increase in the per capita rates for operating grants for municipal and system boards and an adjustment so 2019 population figures are now being used to issue grants instead of 2016 population figures. A base grant of \$9,000 has also been added to all library board grants. These changes especially benefit library boards serving small populations. The only current advocacy effort not achieved was obtaining at least a philosophical commitment from the provincial government to consider an annual grant adjustment to account for inflation.



As the committee moves into its post-election advocacy phase, they discussed and set what their advocacy priorities should be in the immediate future.

Hailey Halberg spoke to the Marketing Report. Parkland prepared and delivered a webinar in July to help library staff navigate important marketing-related topics. The presentation covered what to consider and how to create brand guidelines for libraries, how to identify potential copyright issues on social media, and best practices for the ever-changing social media landscape. The training was used to promote Parkland's services of assisting libraries with creating their own brand guidelines and social media strategies. Several libraries have requested these services since.

As part of the website re-design, logos were needed for all libraries. Staff collected logos from libraries that had them already and created 18 logos for our member libraries that did not have one.

Parkland conducted a survey to find out which initiatives libraries would like staff to organize promotions for, and the majority wanted both library card sign-up activities and Canadian Library Month activities combined into one month.

In 2024, Parkland is celebrating its 65th anniversary. To celebrate this milestone, Parkland is planning several activities. To kick things off, Parkland is hosting a design contest in November. Patrons will be encouraged to submit designs relating to libraries. The winning design will win a \$100 visa gift card and have their design featured on tote bags and other promotional materials.

Sue Heuman from Yellowhead Regional Library, along with Hailey Halberg are working on an advocacy workshop to be presented to library boards for advocating to their councils. It will be available by the end of October.

Motion by Diane Roth to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 51/ 2023

3.9.1. Director's Report

3.9.2. Library Services Report

3.9.3. Anniversary Celebration in Amisk

Rilling asked if there were any questions regarding the Director's Report, Library Services Report, or the Library Celebration in Amisk Report. There were none.

Motion by Barb Gilliat to receive the Director's Report, Library Services Report, and Anniversary Celebration in Amisk Report for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 52/2023



3.10. **Parkland Community Update**

The **Innisfail Public Library** has a new manager. They gave a shoutout to Jessica Dinan, Parkland Consultant, who was a huge help and resource.

The **Amisk Public Library** has been involved with Indigenous partnerships along with the Edmonton and Calgary libraries.

The **Penhold & District Public Library** has had our "Create it Crew" comprised of local students run several programs with introducing kids to 3D printing, Lego creations, Maker space and Art classes. These local students held 25 separate classes engaging 161 children. Having our young teen students mentor the youth in our community through work experience has had such an impact beyond the doors of our library, and it has been a pleasure watching them grow and gain self-confidence.

Our summer reading program was a success again this year. Young readers were issued beads for tracking their reading minutes. Over the Summer 1,525 beads were issued which resulted in an impressive 30,500 minutes of reading!

The **Camrose Public Library** had assistance from the city to add rooms to the library for greater efficiency.

The **Stettler Public Library** is one of several other Stettler organizations that hosted Alberta Culture Days in Stettler from September 1-30. Friends of the Stettler Library group have been successful in accessing grant funding the past few years to help fund the event.

This year's focus was on the Asian culture, particularly the Filipino culture. When new Canadians come to the Stettler they often find the library helpful for supports and skills. One Filipino mother and her son were frequent visitors to the library and she recently accepted a position on the Stettler Library Board.

Motion by Les Stulberg receive the Parkland Community Update for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 53/2023

4. **Adjournment**

Motion by Deb Coombes to adjourn the meeting at 11:50 a.m.

CARRIED
PRLS 54/2023

Chair