



PRLS BOARD TALK

Highlights of the Parkland Regional Library Board Meeting FEBRUARY 26, 2026

Vacant Seat on the Executive Committee

At the November organizational board meeting, seat 7 on Parkland's Executive Committee was not filled. After sending out invitations to PRLS board members for Area 7, staff found two volunteers, Dana Kreil of Lacombe Country and Cory Twerdoelib from Blackfalds. Twerdoelib was appointed.

Parkland Annual Report

Each year Parkland is required to submit an annual report to the Public Library Services Branch (PLSB) at Municipal Affairs.

An annual report infographic with highlights from 2025 will be prepared and distributed to member municipalities in the coming weeks.

Outlet Annual Reports

The Parkland Board is the governing board for three library service points. Highlights from their annual reports are included below:

Brownfield Community Library Accomplishments

This year we really focused on programs/clubs. We successfully run a monthly Adult Book Club, which has been going for more than 15 years. We also ran a Junior High Book Club this year, participation was more than expected. We held a Summer Reading Program every week with the kids. For fundraisers we held a successful Rummage Sale in the spring and an online spring auction. We continue to be passionate about keeping our little library open!

Spruce View Community Library Accomplishments

We have partnered with Red Deer County to bring programs into our library. We are doing more outreach to get our name in the community. In 2025 we celebrated 25 years bringing library services to Spruce View and area.

Water Valley Public Library Accomplishments

We are really happy that we have been able to continue to offer a wide variety of programming for our community. Being a rural community, it can be challenging to find programming locally. Finding instructors can be very challenging, but luckily, we have been able to find some amazing people to help keep our programs running.

Advocacy & Marketing Report

Article on Library Funding

Relating to the library funding resolutions passed at RMA and Alberta Municipalities last November, Parkland's Director was interviewed for an article by CBC.

Radio Interview

On January 6th with very short notice, Sheppard was interviewed live by Edmonton's radio station 880 CHED to discuss library funding in rural communities.

Budget Summary Report

There is an updated version of Parkland's *Budget Summary Report* showing the cost of library service within Parkland for the year 2025. The number of libraries within Parkland that deficit budgeted remained at 35%, the same as 2024.

Provincial Advocacy Steering Committee

Parkland's representation on a steering committee coordinating a provincial advocacy effort has been making significant progress. In addition to Parkland's Director, the committee is composed of the CEOs for Calgary and Edmonton public libraries, and the CEO for Strathcona County Library.

Due to the urgent nature of these issues, Sheppard has met both with members of the steering committee and the broader library community on many occasions.

Parkland's Director and Chair have been meeting with MLAs to ask for an increase in provincial funding for libraries and support the principles of intellectual freedom given that there are strong indications that the

provincial government will almost certainly involve itself in the curation of public library collections.

Marketing for Libraries

Parkland Marketing Specialist, Hailey Halberg, has recently done work for Innisfail, Rimbey, and Big Valley libraries. In Innisfail, she helped create a marketing plan for their new space and took photos at their sneak peek event for sponsors. In Rimbey, Halberg planned, filmed, and edited 10 Instagram Reels for them to use on social media, and created a social media strategy for them. Big Valley Library requested help planning a contest to get more patrons in the door and circulate some of their new materials. Halberg created some social media content and collected some swag for a small giveaway prize.

LinkedIn Presence

You may have noticed a new follow from Parkland Regional Library System on your LinkedIn profile. We are using the platform more regularly, and hope to use it to reach the PRLS board, member library boards, and any member library staff that are on the platform.

County Forums Update

In 2025, Parkland Regional Library System decided to facilitate in-person County Forum interviews with its member libraries for the first time. The aim of the forums was to collect direct feedback from participants and encourage an environment of open dialogue and communication. In fall of 2025, Parkland staff began travelling throughout the region, meeting with library managers in all ten member counties.

Overall, 39 of Parkland's 49 member libraries took part in this project and both their positive and their constructive feedback has been important to Parkland's planning.

Audit Service Plan

Each year the Executive Committee reviews the MNP Draft Audit Service Plan prior to the preparation of the Parkland audit.

After reviewing the plan, the Executive Committee approved it at their January meeting and the auditors conducted their field work at Parkland on February 3-4.

Staff Recognition

Parkland employees are recognized with a monetary reward and pin for long service with PRLS. For 2026, long service award recipients were:

Hailey Halberg – 5 years
Bob Schiltz – 5 years
Olya Korolchuk – 5 years

Committee News from Trustees

Penhold & District Public Library has created Strategic Plan and Annual Report brochures that are being given to MLAs, Penhold Council, and Red Deer County Council, among others. Also, their library manager Myra Binnendyk is retiring after 24 years. Penhold Library appreciates Parkland's support in helping them navigate this retirement and future help for hiring their new library manager.

Camrose Public Library's manager has returned after maternity leave. The *Fellowship of the Camrose Library* started a very successful social media campaign to get funding matched from the province to purchase new children's furniture for their children's reading area. In addition, Carissa Halton who wrote *Revolution Songs* held an event at a local restaurant with the theme of the "Dirty 30's".

Hughenden Public Library is holding a book folding event on February 27th.

Board Members Present

Barb Gilliat (Board Chair), **(Zoom)** Janet Adam, Jackie Almberg, Skyla Attfield, Alison Barker-Jevne, Laureen Clark-Rennie, Curtis Cook, Teresa Cunningham, Lana Curle, Sarah Fahey, Les Fee, Richard Forsberg, Elaine Fossen, Shaleah Fox, Dwayne Fulton, Dustin Gillespie, Matthew Goudy, Kathy Hall, Pam Hansen, Ryanna Hansen, Lindsay Holmen, Kimberlee Hunter, Alt. Haley Amendt for Joe Iwanicki, Dana Kreil, Troy Lambert, Hazen Letwin, Bryce Liddle, Lori Lindseth, Paul Looser, Julie Maplethorpe, Ricci Matthews, Lyle McKellar, Joy-Anne Murphy, Leah Nelson, Cindy Orom, Amanda Peffers, Scott Pfeiffer, Maxine Steil, Matthew Sumegi, Leona Thorogood, Cory Twerdoclib, Teri Underhill, Carlene Wetthuhn, Shannon Wilcox **Absent:** Delijiah Antaloczy, Denise Boniface, Shelley Cook, Todd Dalke, Victor Kelly, Darryl Motley, Marc Mousseau, Bill Rock, Sandy Shipton, Naomi Tercier, Stephen Wyse