



PRLS BOARD TALK

Highlights of the Parkland Regional Library Board Meeting SEPTEMBER 14, 2023

Parkland 2024 Budget

The board passed a motion to approve Parkland's 2024 budget with a 43-cent increase to the requisition level based on the most current population figures. This increase was mandated by the Parkland Executive Committee at their March 16th meeting.

Board members also want to revisit which population numbers Parkland uses for invoicing municipalities at the November board meeting. Lastly, the board wants Parkland to continue their advocacy with the provincial government to obtain regular increases to the library operating grants to help deal with inflationary pressure.

In 2022, 43% of Parkland libraries had deficit budgets.

Compensation Policy Working Group

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

It was a productive first meeting with several recommendations being made. The next meeting of the committee will be a full day in the beginning of October.

Website Refresh Project

The website team continues to work diligently with Parkland's website developer Fishtank Consulting Corp. The launch of Parkland's new websites will occur near the end of October or early November.

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

Community Services Recovery Fund

Parkland applied for a \$200,000 grant 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.

Nordegg Library Move

The hamlet of Nordegg has been gaining in 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. 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 was unofficially re-named the *Rolf & Cheri Adolph Library* to recognize the many years of contributions from Rolf Adolph and his wife Cheri. The library in Nordegg is run entirely by volunteers.

Indigenous Services

PRLS now has two women from the community of Maskwacis employed at the library. As a result, the decision was made to open the library five days per week, 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.

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.

These services are paid for through the On Reserve, On Settlement grant provided by the Public Library Services Branch.

Advocacy Report

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. They 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 set their advocacy priorities for the next few months. They want the system board and municipal boards to continue building relationships with their local MLAs.

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. 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.

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.

Committee News from Trustees

The **Innisfail Public Library** has a new library manager.

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

The **Penhold & District Public Library** has involved local students to run several programs introducing kids to 3D printing, Lego creations, Maker space and Art classes. These local students held 25 separate classes engaging 161 children.

Their 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 represented 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 of the building.

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

This year's focus was on the Asian culture, particularly the Filipino culture. When new Canadians come to Stettler they often find the library helpful with 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.

Board Members 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

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

For more information, or if you want a copy of the draft minutes from this board meeting, please contact PRLS.