



PRLS Board Meeting Minutes May 20, 2021

The regular meeting of the Parkland Regional Library System Board was called to order at 10:06 a.m. on Thursday May 20, 2021 in the Small Board Room, Lacombe.

Present: Debra Smith (Board Chair)

Present via Zoom: Jackie Almberg, Alison Barker-Jevne, Doreen Blumhagen, Amanda Derksen, Kevin Ferguson, Jeanny Fisher, Elaine Fossen, Dwayne Fulton, Sandy Gamble, Bruce Gartside, Clark German, Barb Gilliat, Rick Manning (alternate for Jeanette Herle), Agnes Hoveland, Deborah Juch, Cora Knutson, Dana Kreil, Gord Lawlor, Stephen Levy, Daryl Lougheed, Josephine McKenzie, Philip Massier, Blair Morton, Leah Nelson, Ray Olfert, Terilyn Paulgaard, Norma Penney, Rosella Peterman, Len Phillips, Lori Reid, Danny Rieberger, Heather Ryan, Janine Stannard, Les Stulberg, Patricia Toone, Cindy Trautman, Doug Weir, Shannon Wilcox, Sharon Williamson, Bill Windsor, Mary Ann Wold, Bonita Wood

With Regrets: Trudy Kilner, Bill Rock, Ann Zacharias

Absent: Bill Chandler, Colleen Ebdon, Lonnie Kozlinski, Ricci Matthews, Rick Pankiw, Jas Payne, Heidi Pierce, Mike Yargeau

Staff: Ron Sheppard, Donna Williams, Colleen Schalm, Tim Spark, Kara Hamilton, Haley Amendt, Olya Korolchuk

Guests: Joey Ingram, Lindsay Schmidt, Rebecca Slater from MNP

Call to Order

Meeting called to order at 10:06 a.m. by Smith.

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

Motion by Janine Stannard to excuse Trudy Kilner, Bill Rock and Ann Zacharias from attendance at the board meeting on May 20, 2021 and remain members of the Parkland Board in good standing.

CARRIED
PRLS 14/2021

1.1 Agenda

1.1.2 Adoption of the Agenda

Motion by Bruce Gartside to accept the agenda as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 15/2021

1.2. Approval of Minutes

Smith asked if there were any amendments to the February 25, 2021 minutes.

Patricia Toone mentioned that her contribution to the Parkland Community Update was missing half of her statement. It should read: *Pat Toone: Sundre Library offered Zoom book clubs. Even though the doors were locked, the library stayed open the whole time, and will probably continue the book clubs after the pandemic.*

Motion by Janine Stannard to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2021 meeting as amended.

CARRIED
PRLS 16/2021

1.3. Business arising from the minutes of the February 25, 2020 meeting

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

2.5. Business Arising from the Consent Agenda

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

Motion by Heather Ryan to approve the consent agenda as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 17/2021

3.1. Changes to Parkland’s Amortization Policy – Page 31

Williams reviewed. Parkland’s auditors have suggested a change to the amortization calculation of our building. This suggestion was due to both Parkland’s intention to keep the headquarters building for the long term, and the large gain that was recognized from the sale of the old building.

In MNP’s municipal audits, they have found municipal buildings are generally amortized over 50 years straight-line and recommended Parkland do the same. The auditors made the following policy suggestion:

The current policy:

4.4.3 Amortization of capital assets

Amortization is recorded as an expense in the current year. Capital assets are recorded at cost. Amortization is calculated using the diminishing balance method. Assets are amortized by group following the rates and classes as set by the Canadian Income Tax Act.

The new policy:

4.4.3 Amortization of capital assets

All amortization for assets will be recorded as an expense in the current year. Capital assets are initially recorded at cost.

Amortization for buildings only will be recorded as straight-line over 50 years with full amortization in the first year and with no amortization in the year of disposal. Buildings are amortized using rates from the Alberta Municipal Affairs Toolkit.

For all other capital assets, amortization is calculated using the diminishing balance method, with full amortization in the first year and with no amortization in the year of disposal. Assets are amortized by group following the rates and classes as set by the Canadian Income Tax Act.

Motion by Philip Massier to approve the new amortization of capital assets policy statement as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 18/2021

3.2. Approval of 2020 Audit – Page 33

Lindsey Schmidt and Joey Ingram from Parkland's audit company, MNP, presented the audit.

The *Parkland Regional Library System 2020 Audit Findings Report to the Board of Directors/Executive Committee for December 31, 2020*, two additional letters to the board and the *Financial Statements December 31, 2020* was provided by PRLS's auditors MNP. In their report, the auditors state:

We have fulfilled our responsibilities, as set out in the terms of the audit engagement letter dated December 15, 2020, for the preparation and fair presentation of the Library's financial statements in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards. We believe these financial statements are complete and present fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Library as at December 31, 2020, and the results of its operations and its cash flows, in accordance with Canadian public sector accounting standards.

Parkland received a clean audit. However, the auditors had two recommendations in their management letter, first, that employee timesheets should always be reviewed by immediate supervisors and approved by signature. Secondly, it was noted that reserve balances were below the recommended minimum outlined in the Governance Policies and Bylaws. They recommended that the board discuss transferring funds to these reserve accounts to meet minimum recommended levels or that the Governance policies be updated if the board believes these minimum levels should be reconsidered. They added that all other points from 2019 were rectified by management during the year.

Doreen Blumhagen entered the meeting at 10:43 a.m.

Motion by Elaine Fossen to approve the Parkland Regional Library System 2020 Audit Finding Report to the board of Directors/Executive Committee for December 31, 2020 as presented.

CARRIED
PRLS 19/2021

Joey Ingram, Lindsay Schmidt and Rebecca Slater left the meeting at 10:48 a.m.

3.3. Reserve Top-ups – Page 80

Smith reviewed. At the recommendation of the auditors, the Executive Committee reviewed the reserve levels. At the time of their April 22nd meeting, the Unrestricted Reserve was valued at \$418,860. Since not all Parkland's reserves were at the recommended minimum levels as stated

in PRLS policy, and as noted by MNP during the audit, staff requested to move funds from the Unrestricted Reserve to replenish four reserves. Parkland's Executive Committee is empowered to move reserve funds between board meetings.

Policy states the Building Reserve's recommended minimum level should be \$250,000. It had been at \$150,000. Staff recommended moving \$100,000 from the Unrestricted Reserve to the Building Reserve.

Amanda Derksen left the meeting at 10:50 a.m.

Policy states the Contingent Liability Reserve's recommended minimum level should be \$50,000 but its level had been at \$8,519 with more expenses likely to come in 2021. Staff recommended moving \$45,000 from the Unrestricted Reserve to the Contingent Liability Reserve.

Policy states that the Technology Reserve should carry a balance of between \$300,000 and \$500,000. When considering the current amount of \$291,716 and the additional purchases this year of \$131,000 it was estimated that this reserve will be valued at \$160,716 by the end of 2021. Staff therefore recommended that \$140,000 be moved from the Unrestricted Reserve to the Technology Reserve to leave an estimated balance at December 31 of \$300,716.

The Vehicle Reserve is an unfunded reserve that had been valued at \$74,347. It is only replenished in years when Parkland has surpluses. Staff are working to smooth out replacing the cargo vans with one purchase a year over the next three years. We currently run three cargo vans. Without additional funding, there would be insufficient funds to pay for new vehicles. Staff therefore recommended that \$50,000 be moved from the Unrestricted Reserve to the Vehicle Reserve. With this movement of monies, the Vehicle Reserve should be sufficiently funded to cover purchases through 2025.

After some discussion, the Executive Committee decided to move fewer funds to the Building reserve, and move more funds to the Technology Reserve and the Vehicle Reserve. They were aware of the policy stating that the Building Reserve be at a minimum of \$250,000, but with a new building, it was assumed that there will not be a need for major repairs in the next few years. The Executive Committee preferred to slowly bring the Building Reserve up to the minimum recommended amount of \$250,000 within the next 5 years.

At their meeting, the Executive Committee approved the:

- movement of \$25,000 to the Building Reserve,
- movement of \$45,000 to the Contingent Liability Reserve,
- movement of \$190,000 to the Technology Reserve, and
- the movement of \$75,000 to the Vehicle Reserve.

This left the balance of the Unrestricted Reserve at \$83,860

Motion by Janine Stannard to receive for information

CARRIED
PRLS 20/2021

3.4. Treasury Board and Finance Population Numbers – Page 82

Sheppard reviewed. According to clause 8.3 of Parkland's master agreement, when invoicing members for the requisition, "*The population of a municipality that is a Party to this Agreement shall be deemed to be the most recent population figure for the municipality as published by Alberta Municipal Affairs.*" However, according to the Government of Alberta's website "*The Municipal Affairs Population List has been discontinued and will be replaced by population estimates from Treasury Board and Finance in the future.*" The Government of Alberta (GOA) website further states that "*The Office of Statistics and Information at Treasury Board and Finance provides regular population estimates and projections for each census division in Alberta. Please note that population figures between the municipal population lists and the provincial population estimates and projections will differ due to different methodologies used to account for population.*"

The potential problem for Parkland is that the last updated official population list from Municipal Affairs uses 2019 population figures and, as stated, will no longer be updated. Instead, the only official population figures appear to be those from the Treasury Board. However, the population numbers are noticeably different.

At their March 25th meeting, the Executive Committee examined the issue. They recommended that for 2021, Parkland invoice municipalities using the updated 2019 population figures supplied by Alberta Municipal Affairs. For 2022, Parkland is to build the budget and invoice municipalities based on the population estimates supplied by Treasury Board and Finance. At the Executive Committee's direction, notice of this change was sent to all Parkland member municipalities and board members on March 31, 2021.

Due to some confusion, three municipalities responded to Parkland's communication on this subject. After Parkland staff provided clarification on the matter, the three municipalities were content with Parkland's position.

At the Executive Committee's direction, Parkland is building a budget for 2022 without increasing the per capita rate of the municipal requisition/levy. This will mean that the per capita levy will remain the same for three consecutive years.

Motion by Len Philips to receive for information

CARRIED

PRLS 21/2021

3.5. Purchase of Chairs from Reserves – Page 89

Sheppard reviewed. To equip the new meeting rooms with some new, comfortable furniture, staff purchased 30 new chairs. Since this was an unbudgeted expense, staff exercised the opportunity to pay for these chairs with funds from the Equipment/Furnishings Reserve. Cost for the chairs equaled \$4,899.33. The balance left in the Equipment/Furnishing Reserve equaled \$45,101

At their April 22nd meeting, the Executive Committee reviewed the purchase of chairs without concern.

Motion by Gord Lawlor to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 22/2021

3.6. 2022 Strategic Plan – Page 90

At the February board meeting, the Parkland Board made the decision to extend the current strategic plan for another year. This is because with the shutdowns and limitations on meetings, conducting a needs assessment in 2021 for a new plan in 2022 would be very difficult. Moreover, engaging in a new strategic plan that focuses on services Parkland provides to libraries is better conducted post-pandemic since what libraries require now will be very different from what they will require when we (hopefully) return to normal.

At the last meeting, motions were made to support the four goals of Parkland's current strategic plan and extend the plan for one more year.

In compliance with legislation, staff duly sent the strategic plan and workplan along with an explanation and motions made by the board to the Public Library Services Branch (PLSB) at Municipal Affairs. Unfortunately, the PLSB did not accept the extension of the strategic plan because there is no allowance to extend a plan of service in the legislation. To quote PLSB staff, *"PLSB needs to file a document that clearly indicates it is Parkland's 2022 strategic plan, not Parkland's 2019-2021 plan that has been extended for one year."* So, Parkland can use the same plan for another year, but the board had to approve it as the strategic plan for 2022 and not just extend the plan for another year. To fulfill legislative requirements, staff therefore proposed to approve the current strategic plan as the strategic plan for 2022.

Motion by Les Stulberg to endorse the 2019-2021 Strategic Plan document and approve it as Parkland's one-year strategic plan for 2022.

CARRIED
PRLS 23/2021

3.7. Parkland Investments – Page 98

Williams reviewed. According to Parkland's Annual Agenda policy, the Executive Committee is to review Parkland's investments at least twice a year.

In past years, Parkland only invested its funds in GICs and in a conservative, managed bond portfolio. RBC Wealth Management, Dominion Securities is the company managing PRLS' investment account. Our investor, Adam Lamb, reported that he does not think any changes are needed at this time but likely we will want to look at changes in the next 6-12 months before the Bank of Canada starts raising interest rates as that can hurt longer maturity bonds. At that point PRLS may want to own shorter term bonds as well as a bit of floating rate bonds to capitalize on raising interest rates. Lamb does not believe the Bank of Canada is in any rush to raise rates in the near future as the pandemic has created a lot of debt but higher interest rates are something to be aware of.

Staff did not recommend changing Parkland's overall investment strategy of keeping funds in a conservative, managed bond portfolio. PRLS does not currently have funds invested in GICs.

After reviewing the matter, the Executive Committee did not mandate any changes to Parkland's investment strategy.

Motion by Cindy Trautman to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 24/2021

3.8. 2020 Outlet Annual Reports – Page 106

Sheppard reviewed. Included in the package was the annual reports for the four library service points for which the Parkland Board is the governing board. Under the Alberta Libraries Act, the PRLS Board must approve the annual reports for these service points. They are:

- Brownfield Community Library – County of Paintearth
- Nordegg Public Library – Clearwater County
- Spruce View Community Library – Red Deer County
- Water Valley Public Library – Mountain View County

There is usually a delay in bringing these reports forward for review since these four libraries usually do not have their reports completed in time for the February board meeting.

Staff have not attempted to make comprehensive statistical comparisons between 2019 and 2020 due to the unprecedented interruptions to library service caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. That Parkland's outlet libraries have worked so hard to adapt services during this difficult time is testimony to their adaptiveness, resilience and resolve.

The reports have already been submitted to the Public Library Services Branch in compliance with the February 28th deadline. There were no questions regarding the reports.

Motion by Shannon Wilcox to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 25/2021

3.9. Advocacy Committee Report – Page 173

Barb Gilliat gave the Advocacy report verbally. She talked about how Library service has stayed the same over the years, but also has adapted and changed some of the ways those services are delivered. A video about the Parkland annual report was shared next, and then a video about Parkland services "Then and Now" which highlighted the similarities and differences between services from the 1970s and now. Norma Penney then spoke about the Parkland Municipal ROIs, which are found on the Parkland website.

Motion by Stephen Levy to receive for information

CARRIED
PRLS 26/2021

3.10. Parkland Community Update

Barb Gilliat – The Alix Public Library manager is doing book reviews and posting them online. They are very popular and useful because patrons can only do curbside pickup at this time.

Gord Lawlor – The Town and County of Stettler have created an intermunicipal library board. The Stettler Public Library is using a 3D printer to print items for senior hobby kits. One of the items printed are knitting bobbins for a Learn to Knit kit.

Les Stulburg – The Stettler Public Library is livestreaming on Facebook for new gardeners. They are also continuing their outreach to 3 seniors lodges and 3 Hutterite colonies, and producing early literacy kits for children.

Shannon Wilcox – Mountain View County libraries are working together to make sure that patrons of all the county libraries have equal access. They are focusing on mental health supports, early literacy and are holding a Teen Kindness awareness program that accepts nominations for a Kindness Award with prizes.

Doreen Blumhagen – The Castor Municipal Library has hired new staff and has had a big reset. Parkland staff have been a fantastic resource. They are looking for a book drop box that is weatherproof.

Heather Ryan – Before the recent restrictions, when the restaurants moved to outdoor seating the Olds & District Municipal Library thought to move outdoors also. They placed two computers outside for patrons as well as a rack of lending books and had a staff member outside to assist. It was well received but couldn't continue due to COVID restrictions.

Terilyn Paulgaard – The Provost Municipal Library held a silent auction, with sale items donated by local businesses. Pictures of items were posted on their Facebook page. The public was notified via Facebook, local Facebook groups and signs on Main Street. Bids were taken via phone. The event was very successful and brought in \$3,000.

Norma Penney – The Clive Public Library held their annual book sale virtually. It was as successful as in-person book sales have been in the past.

Motion by Norma Penney to receive for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 27/2021

3.11.1. Director's Report

3.11.2. Library Services Report

3.11.3. IT Report

3.11.4. Finance and Operations Report

3.11.5. ALTA Report

Smith asked if there were any questions regarding the Director's, Library Services, IT, Finance and Operations, or ALTA reports. There were none.

Motion by Gord Lawlor to receive the Director's, Library Services, IT, Finance and Operations, and ALTA Reports for information.

CARRIED
PRLS 28/2021

4. Adjournment

Motion by Barb Gilliat to adjourn the meeting at 11:38 a.m.

CARRIED
PRL 29/2021

Meeting adjourned at 11:38 a.m.

Chair