

MINUTES of the**SASKATOON PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD**

The Saskatoon Public Library Board met on Wednesday, June 17, 2020, by video conference.

Present: Brett Bradshaw (Chair) Elise Truscott
 Hilary Gough John Thronberg
 Cheryl Starr Markel Chernenkoff
 Elizabeth Kuley Carol Cooley, Director of Libraries & CEO
 Jim Siemens Rachel Landriault (recorder)

Regrets:

Guests: Laura Warner, Director, Corporate Services & Facilities
 Scott Gregor, Director, Finance and Administrative Services

B. Bradshaw, Chair called the meeting to order at 4:02 p.m.

AGENDA

Moved by J. Thronberg, seconded by H. Gough **THAT the Agenda of June 17, 2020, be approved as circulated, including any items removed from, or added to the Agenda.**

Carried.

- Added - May Operating Variance Report
- Added - Canadian Urban Library Council (CULC) Statement on Race & Social Equity

Previous Minutes

Moved by E. Truscott, seconded by J. Siemens **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board Minutes of May 20, 2020, be adopted as circulated, including any revisions to be made.**

Carried.

Declaration of Conflict of Interest

E. Kuley declared a conflict of interest with an In-Camera agenda item. She will leave the in-camera portion of the meeting for the item and will not participate in a vote if a motion is made when the Board comes out of camera.

DEPUTATIONS/PRESENTATIONS/PUBLIC MEETING

No deputations, presentations or public meeting.

C. NEW BUSINESS

C.1 Pandemic Policy

C. Cooley stated that the existing Pandemic Policy was developed in 2009. Having gone through the COVID-19 pandemic, they feel the revised Policy would be very valuable.

H. Gough reference page 13, Stage 1 of the agenda package - Pandemic Alert Period. She asked for confirmation that the actions under the second bullet would not be implemented during Stage 1, but would be developed for implementation at a later stage.

C. Cooley responded, yes, but that it would also depend on the restrictions imposed by the government.

H. Gough suggested changing the wording in the policy to clarify this. She recommended "The Pandemic Response Task Force develops the strategy for implementation."

H. Gough stated that the Policy does not speak about following public health orders and that those orders would supersede the Collective Agreement.

C. Cooley agreed to amend the Library Response section on page 2 of the Policy to reflect H. Gough's comments.

H. Gough indicated that the Pandemic Response Procedure contains some specific references that make assumptions about what a pandemic reaction might be. She referenced page 2, section 1, second bullet of the Procedure, where it states "if they suspect flu-like symptoms." Flu-like symptoms were not entirely relevant to this pandemic. She suggested generalizing the language in this section. She said that she liked the inclusion of providing resources in support to the community and suggested clarifying it by changing the wording to "providing resources and information in support to the community about the emergency."

C. Cooley thanked H. Gough for her comments and indicated that L. Warner would revise the Procedure considering these suggestions.

E. Kuley referenced page 12 of the Policy and asked what "incident stabilization" means.

C. Cooley responded that it is the number of potential incidents.

L. Warner confirmed that its goal is to report the number of incidents to employees.

E. Kuley asked if the Policy should encompass epidemic and pandemic.

C. Cooley stated that the Policy would be revised to provide clarity on this point.

C. Cooley stated that they would amend the Policy as discussed and that it will return to the Board in September for review. She said that they would change the Procedure to reflect some of the comments provided today and that it would not return to the Board.

C.2 Reopening Plan

C. Cooley stated that people are happy with the holds pickup and our protocols. She does not see the holds pickup service being pulled back unless specifically directed by the Province.

C. Cooley stated that SPL's built environment would determine how SPL moves through the plan stages. Security measures need to be in place, particularly at four SPL Branches. Procedures for each new stage also need to be developed. SPL has a scheduled meeting on July 2nd to reassess the holds pickup service, which is labour intensive and taxing SPL's capacity. They are looking at ways to make the service more efficient.

C. Cooley added that SPL intends for the implementation to be flexible because they may need to move back and forth between stages due to possible health orders, capacity issues etc. She believes that the one stage that will remain stable is Stage 2. She does not think SPL will get to Stage 5 until a vaccine is available. She said that she emailed the accompanying Procedures and Guidelines to the Board via email should they want more information. These documents were also saved in the Board's Dropbox.

C. Cooley recognized the leadership that L. Warner and B. Cote have shown in developing the plan. SPL Managers and Executives are highly skilled, so developing this plan was not as much of a struggle, but still required a lot of effort. She stated that she could not have imagined getting this done five years ago.

B. Bradshaw congratulated C. Cooley and her team on the incredible work they did on reopening. There was great enthusiasm shown by the public. She experienced the pickup service and stated that it was very smooth and worked well.

M. Chernenkoff stated that the plan looked great. He asked if Stage 5 is dependent on the government's phases.

C. Cooley responded that they were not and that the only thing that is connected to the government's plan is the fact that we can continue with holds pickup until they hear otherwise.

M. Chernenkoff stated that it made sense and that this was most employers' approach.

H. Gough stated that SPL is currently in Stage 2 and asked if Stage 3 must wait for the Province's Phase 4B.

C. Cooley responded, yes.

H. Gough asked if when the Province reaches Phase 4B, will SPL decide on the pace it will move through Stages 3, 4 and 5.

C. Cooley responded, yes.

C. Cooley said that some branches are extremely busy with holds pickup, but not all of them. They will monitor the situation and might decide to reduce the number of branches offering this service. The next step for consideration might be restoring computer access to patrons, which could potentially be at the branches that have less holds pickups.

H. Gough asked if there was access to the contact list services right now by people who don't or can't use online systems. She wondered if patrons could call in their requests.

C. Cooley responded, yes. Patrons can call or present themselves at a branch to request materials.

L. Warner added that when a patron comes to a branch unexpectedly to request materials, an SPL employee would complete a form and make sure that their item(s) is delivered to an SPL location of their choosing.

B. Bradshaw asked if there were themed grab bags.

C. Cooley responded, yes.

C. Cooley asked L. Warner to provide the Board with an update on a meeting she had with the Lighthouse, and the impact the pandemic has had on downtown activity. She said they had some interesting information on Security, which they shared with a group of SPL employees.

L. Warner reported that they spoke with Lighthouse management last week because SPL heard about the success story Midtown Plaza had working with the Lighthouse when they reopened. They gave background information on what's going on downtown. Many of their clients were aware of CERB and the extra funds from the government, which leads to more money, and therefore, more street economy circulating. This also meant more drug use. The drug supply was impacted by the closing of the Canada/US border. They warned that the situation might create more heightened incidents downtown when things reopen. There is more violence and thefts. They also shared many of their success stories as well, which some included Midtown's Security. They will be offering SPL the same services, so they will visit SPL to look at their space. They gave SPL great advice. For example, some people who use the Lighthouse might have an intellectual disability or may suffer from brain trauma, so they might not know what a two-meter distance looks like when outside of the Lighthouse (out of context).

C. Cooley stated that SPL would be developing some training and strategies to address new challenges.

J. Siemens referenced Page 24, Stage 3 – Branches Reopened with Restrictions and asked how SPL determined the number of patrons that can enter the libraries.

C. Cooley responded that the recommendations were drawn from the Cushman and Wakefield report.

J. Siemens stated that the national building code allows for 1.85 sq/m per person under standard occupancy of public areas. That does not include staff work areas or bathrooms etc. He recommended that SPL not include their employee work areas in their calculations when determining their distances in each branch.

C. Cooley stated that most SPL employees would continue to work from home because they are currently set-up to do so and would not want to bring everyone back to the branches only to have them return home and go through the set-up again should SPL need to take a step back and close again.

J. Siemens stated that he assumes that the calculation in the report will be based on the public spaces of the branches.

C. Cooley responded, yes.

B. Bradshaw asked if C. Cooley received feedback from employees that have returned to work at the branches.

C. Cooley responded, yes, employees are pleased and excited to be back and able to provide service to our community. SPL employees are getting positive feedback from the public on the holds pickup service. Meetings with management and the Union are held weekly to get feedback from them as well. SPL has not received any refusal to return to work.

H. Gough referenced the Personal Protective Equipment Guidelines and noted some key points were missing, such as the importance of not touching your mask when wearing one. Doing so is riskier than not wearing one.

C. Cooley stated that the Guideline contains the initial thoughts around PPE. Since then, SPL has accessed some online training videos from the Health Region and the Federal Government that employees can access through Niche Academy. SPL can develop courses and track who has taken them, so they have a variety of safety information, which includes PPE (masks).

H. Gough stated that there are very few places in a library setting where an expert in PPE usage would recommend for us. She believes that hand washing is more effective than wearing masks, and SPL should emphasize that.

C. Cooley stated that they have been emphasizing with employees that hand washing and social distancing are the best safety measures they can undertake. Managers are having conversations with their workgroups about the shared responsibility of health and safety, and executives have had those conversations with the Union as well. They are getting people comfortable with respectfully asking or reminding colleagues about the importance of social distancing and hand washing.

H. Gough asked if the work SPL has done to help manage expectations and accommodations around that would continue to be effective and sufficient as it moves towards reopening.

C. Cooley responded that she was unable to give a definitive answer at this time. However, SPL now has their Manager of Human Resource in place, and they will work through the challenges as they present themselves. She informed the Board that she obtained legal advice on the expectations of an employer in terms of accommodating employees. She believes many employees will keep working from home for quite some time if there is no need for them to be in the office. The presence of Managers in the office remains important when employees return to the office.

B. Bradshaw asked if SPL mandated employees to take vacations.

C. Cooley stated that due to the Fusion project with the City of Saskatoon, SPL must set parameters on how much vacation employees can roll over to the next year, so they are encouraging employees, including managers, to book time off. SPL will pay out anything over and above the two-week carryover limit.

E. Kuley referenced the Risks section on page 23 of the agenda package. She believes two risks were not considered: The decrease in employee productivity due to following the hygiene requirements; and consideration around employee mental health and fatigue. Some people may be uncomfortable and scared when at work, and many online meetings require the use of technology that employees may struggle with.

C. Cooley agreed and stated that burnout is also a risk because executives and managers have been putting in significant hours of work since the start of the pandemic. Executives have been encouraging managers to book a vacation day every week if necessary to maintain work/life balance.

E. Kuley referenced page 24 and stated that in Stage 3, there is no mention of a specific number of employees. She asked if SPL had a plan.

C. Cooley responded that the document presented today was a framework. Stage 2 had a more robust plan because it included curbside pickup, which was planned out. SPL's Reopen and Reimagine Steering Committee has not yet worked out the details of the remaining stages, but they met yesterday, and they will start to develop a more detailed plan for Stage 3.

E. Kuley referenced page 24, Stage 2, second bullet - physical distancing is still encouraged, but masks may be worn when this is not possible. She asked if SPL does not require employees to wear masks when distancing is not possible.

C. Cooley confirmed that they must wear a mask if distancing is not possible. The wording in the document will be changed to "will be worn."

E. Kuley referenced page 28 of the package – In-Branch Work Guidelines and asked if SPL is adding hand washing stations to facilitate employees' frequent hand washing.

C. Cooley indicated that SPL is considering multiple options for the public areas, one of which would be to have hand sanitizer in all areas.

B. Bradshaw asked if SPL is having any difficulties sourcing hand sanitizer.

C. Cooley responded, no.

E. Kuley asked how SPL would manage the increased number of people accessing washrooms to wash their hands and avoid line-ups.

C. Cooley advised that she would bring this concern to the attention of the Steering Committee for their consideration.

H. Gough stated the importance of securing the hand sanitizers in public areas when SPL reopens to the public. The Inter-Agency Response has put together some kind of reopening advice around that, and they shared it with Midtown and others. It would be available for SPL as well.

C. Cooley stated that she was on some of those committees. SPL has ordered stationery flip dispensers for the public areas. They don't specifically require Purell, but they do need proper hand sanitizer, and they dispense product by pushing a foot pedal.

Moved by E. Kuley, seconded by J. Thronberg **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board approve the Reopening Plan.**

Carried.

L. Warner left the meeting.

C.3 Closure Dates 2021

C. Cooley informed the Board that the 2020 SPL Employee Development Day was cancelled due to the pandemic.

Moved by J. Thronberg, seconded by E. Kuley **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board approve the 2021 Closure Dates as recommended.**

Carried.

D. REPORTS FROM THE BOARD

D.1 Chairperson Updates

B. Bradshaw informed the Board that she, E. Kuley and C. Cooley attended a webinar earlier in the day on governance during a pandemic. She reported the following key points that were discussed:

- Finding a communication method that works; that does not overburden the CEO and Executives during a busy time, while at the same time ensuring the Board feels like they are well informed on the activities and is comfortable with what is going on.
- The importance of having a good relationship with the CEO, which this Board has.
- Ensuring Board members communicate their thoughts and questions for the CEO through the Chair.
- Try to keep the governance aspect as their focus and ensure the right policies are in place.

C. Cooley added that the way SPL is operating is reflected in the same way the presenters were operating. She feels as though the Board is governance focussed. However, operational procedures and guidelines are shared with the Board sometimes, so they have an understanding of what is in place for employees. She stated that the webinar reinforced her belief that SPL is doing the right things.

D.2 SLTA Report

J. Thronberg informed the Board that he would be on a call with the Deputy Premier for the Minister's Brief next Thursday, June 25th. He intends to report any relevant information back to the Board.

E. REPORT FROM ADMINISTRATION

E.1 Director of Libraries & CEO Updates

The Saskatoon Public Library Board received C. Cooley's report.

C. Cooley informed the Board that SPL has a skeleton Foundation that requires Annual Returns to be filed. All Board Members are appointed Directors of this Foundation; therefore, their electronic signatures are needed so they can file the Annual Returns. She asked Board members to send their e-signature to R. Landriault if they have not already done so.

C. Cooley regretfully informed the Board that the chiller repair quote of \$38k that the Board previously approved is now inaccurate. Once the vendor opened the unit, he provided a detailed report with pictures to support his need to revise the quote. The cost for repairs is now estimated at double the original price. She confirmed that FMCL's maintenance reserve would be able to cover the revised cost. She approved moving forward with the repairs because warmer temperatures have arrived, and the building is uncomfortably warm.

C. Cooley stated that individually wrapped ice cream treats were delivered to branches this week to thank employees for coming back. SPL's "Buddy Program" has been successful and appreciated by many. As an example of its success, she informed the Board that a person living in a nursing home had lost all her friends and felt very alone. She is extremely grateful to have someone from SPL to talk to once a week. It is always the same SPL employee, so they are developing a relationship.

B. Bradshaw informed the Board that she had also received a text message over the weekend. Someone she knows well, who works at the Regina Public Library (RPL), was aware of SPL's "Buddy Program" and shared the information with her colleagues. They were very impressed with SPL's response to the pandemic, its innovative programming, and in particular, its "Buddy Program."

S. Gregor joined the meeting.

Variance Report

C. Cooley stated that SPL is tracking COVID-19 expenditures separately, but there is nothing to share with the Board right now. It is early for projecting surplus, but SPL will be monitoring that this year.

J. Thronberg asked if the COVID-19 expenses include the holds lockers.

S. Gregor responded, no. Those were approved as a separate expenditure.

C. Cooley stated that SPL is creating a spreadsheet that will track all COVID-19 expenses, including Capital expenditures.

H. Gough asked what the external tenant lease figures represent.

S. Gregor responded that they are the leases from the property SPL purchased for the new central library. The only tenant that has paid their rent to date is the Saskatchewan Liquor & Gaming Authority. S. Gregor reported that SPL is eligible for the Canadian Emergency Commercial Rent Assistance (CECRA), and SPL is moving forward with putting this in place. The program requires SPL to forgive 25% of the rent for April, May and June; the tenants pay 25% of their rent for these months; CECRA covers the remaining 50%. This means that SPL will forgive \$6,342 of rental revenue.

H. Gough stated that the Operating Variance Report result for this item is marked as “favourable.” She asked if this was because it wasn’t budgeted.

S. Gregor responded, yes, and it represents the gross revenue. He stated that there is also a budget variance line called “tenant management” that represents the expenses that offset some of that revenue.

S. Gregor reported that SPL also qualifies and is in the process of applying for the 10% Wage Subsidy Program that would cover 10% of the wages SPL paid from March 15 to the end of May. This represents approximately \$190k. He stated that he did not know if this program would be extended past May.

B. Bradshaw and C. Cooley thanked S. Gregor.

S. Gregor left the meeting.

Moved by C. Starr, seconded by J. Siemens **THAT the Reports from Administration be received as information.**

Carried.

F. BUSINESS CARRIED FORWARD

F.1 Board Skills, Strength & Diversity

B. Bradshaw reported that the Skills, Strength & Diversity Matrix that each Board Member completed revealed that the Board as a whole scored low in “Connections” sections Early Years, K-12 and Philanthropy. She noted that Philanthropy had been highlighted in the past when doing call-outs for Board members.

J. Thronberg stated that what stood out for him was the lack of diversity on the Board.

Moved by J. Thronberg, seconded by M. Chernenkoff **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board receive this report for information, discussion, and direction.**

Carried.

F.2 Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) Statement on Race & Social Equity

C. Cooley informed the Board that at the last CULC meeting, the directors agreed to endorse the Statement on Race & Social Equity that was shared with Board members earlier. She asked if SPL Board Members would endorse the statement. SPL has previously endorsed the Intellectual Freedom Statement. If the Board endorses it, it would be shared with employees and posted on our website.

J. Thronberg stated that to move forward in race & social equity, SPL must try to increase the diversity at the leadership/decision-making level.

C. Cooley agreed and added that she believes that diversity exists in the organization, but not at the management or executive levels.

H. Gough asked if SPL has ever had a practice around reporting diversity statistics and potential recruiting targets. She also asked if the Board could have a report in the next 12 months on SPL's diversity statistics. Then perhaps, the Board could develop a method of reporting on this regularly so SPL can contemplate targets.

C. Cooley stated that SPL asks employees to self-declare, but this is optional for them. She will discuss reporting with S. Gregor and A. Jorgenson so they can investigate the data that SPL is currently collecting and if a report can be generated based on that data. She will report back to the Board at a future meeting.

Moved by H. Gough, seconded by C. Starr **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board agree to endorse the CULC Statement on Race & Social Equity.**

Carried.

Moved by H. Gough, seconded by C. Starr **THAT Administration will report back within 12 months on what data is available on employee diversity at all levels.**

Carried.

IN-CAMERA SESSION

Moved by H. Gough, seconded by E. Truscott **THAT the meeting move in-camera for the purpose of addressing matters pertaining to Economic/Financial – Land as permitted under Sections 17(1)(d) and (e) of LAFOIPP and matters pertaining to Labour/Personnel under Sections 16(1)(c) of LAFOIPP.**

Carried.

Board moved in-camera at 5:44 p.m.

Board moved into public session at 7:25 p.m.

Moved by H. Gough, seconded by J. Siemens **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board award the Owner's Representative Contract to Colliers Project Leaders at a maximum upset cost of \$2,125,000 excluding disbursements and GST and pending the agreement of a contract acceptable to SPL.**

Carried.

Moved by H. Gough, seconded by M. Chernenkoff **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board receive the report on the Alice Turner McFarland Award and award each of the four qualified candidates \$2,500.00.**

Carried.

Moved by H. Gough, seconded by J. Thronberg **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board accept the Personnel and Nominations Committee recommendation regarding the CEO Evaluation and proceed as directed.**

Carried.

ADJOURNMENT

Moved by M. Chernenkoff, seconded by J. Thronberg **THAT the Saskatoon Public Library Board does now adjourn at 7:34 p.m. to meet again September 16, 2020, Frances Morrison Central Library, 311-23rd Street East, Saskatoon or at the call of the Chair.**

Carried.
