



*Inspire together & expand horizons*

**Board Meeting minutes  
September 25, 2021 – 9:30am Pacific/10:30am Mountain**

**Location: via Zoom**

**Trustees:** Lynda Anderson-Thibault (Midway), Kevin Atherton (Elkford), Joanne Beetstra (Trail), Connie Beranek (Sparwood), Dave Evans (Greenwood), Jennifer Gawne (Salmo), Shannon Girardo (Beaver Valley), Anne Heard (Kaslo), Wendy Hurst (Castlegar), Mary Kierans (Grand Forks), Abby Kokolski (Radium), Jan Kohlhauser (Midway), Daneve McAffer (Invermere), Laurie Riehl (Creston), Abigail Steele (Rossland), Gail Wakulich (Cranbrook), Terry Welsh (Nakusp Alternate)

**Absent:** Randi Fjeldseth (Nelson), Cathie Kearns (Kimberley), Linda King (Penticton), Frank Longo (Ferne)

**Guest:** Mari Martin, Director, Public Libraries Branch

**KLF Staff:** Melanie Reaveley, Executive Director

**Library Directors:** Stacey Boden (Rossland), Ursula Brigl (Cranbrook), Saara Itkonen (Creston), Samantha Murphy (Trail), Marie Oynett (Beaver Valley)

**Call to Order 9:30am**

**Welcome – Daneve**

1. Territorial acknowledgment by Mari Martin
2. Approval of agenda was made by Mary Kierans and seconded by Joanne Beetstra. Carried.
3. Public Libraries Branch update & presentation by Mari Martin.
  - Mari thanked Board members for their work at their member libraries and the bonus KLF board. She acknowledged that local volunteers are so important.
  - Recognized the importance of Federations to the Public Libraries Branch (PLB) as both groups work to support the PLB strategic plan. In turn, Federations have an influence on the PLB strategic plan, according to the needs of libraries.

- A large awareness exists of the role of Trustees in strong public libraries by the Minister of Municipal Affairs. Mari mentioned the fact that Kootenay Boundary Regional District members met with Minister Josie Osborne at UBCM.
- Recognition of the value of libraries, especially during COVID, of people coming together to support one another.
- Mari described her team and the scope of their work: governance, legislation, funding, accountability and reporting.
- The PLB strategic plan launched in April 2020. It sets out the work of the PLB and their priorities when working with partners such as Federations, BCLTA, BCLA, etc.
- Libraries are a place to engage citizens, deliver shared services, etc.
- PLB is always working on COVID guidance for libraries. There is a high understanding in government that libraries play an important role serving people and want to see libraries open to the public. There has been wise risk management to ensure libraries can remain open, safely.
- Mari mentioned the Accessible BC Act – the future role of libraries with this new legislation, ensuring libraries as workplaces and public facilities are more accessible. (BC was the last province to have such legislation.) Link to more information: <https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2021SDPR0046-001182>
- Implementation of UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. The Act became law Nov 2019. Link to more information: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/governments/indigenous-people/new-relationship/united-nations-declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenous-peoples>  
The government is working on an action plan. Mari acknowledged that the KLF is at the forefront for providing resources and training with furthering reconciliation and inclusion.
- October is Library Month. Nationally, the Canadian Library Federation of Library Associations is promoting Canadian Library Month. For more information and a link to promotional materials: <https://cfla-fcab.ca/en/programs/cdn-library-month/>
- In BC, the focus of Library Month will be to recognize and celebrate the work of libraries. The BC Proclamation is available at: <https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/proclamations/proclamations/LibraryMthandDay2021>
- Mari encouraged Trustees to share any initiatives using social media. Include Minister Osborne in your tweets @Josie\_Osborne
- Some background about the PLB strategic plan. The 2016 plan was developed with huge engagement from BC libraries. Then there was a government change and the PLB worked to connect access to citizens to align with government priorities of supporting better internet connectivity, and building out provincial e-resources.
- The 2020 strategic plan continues this work and builds on the relationships developed over the past 5 years. The plan includes broad statements of what is wanted to achieve, along with big themes with descriptions. Link to the current PLB plan: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/administration/community-partnerships/libraries/libraries-strategic-plan.pdf>
- Their strategic plan is meant to be a companion plan for libraries and federations, where connections to the broader goals exist. Our strategic plans, hopefully, tie to the province and include our regional priorities.

- The PLB is now in year 2 of their plan. It is fortunate that it continues to support the work of government and that the plan was in place when COVID hit. Priorities continue to be providing access via physical spaces, internet connectivity, and improving electronic collections. These are all important and relevant elements to support isolated citizens due to COVID.

- Mari welcomed questions from the floor:

1. How do you prepare your budget every year? Do our advocacy efforts match? COVID and accessibility legislation – how do these all connect? If libraries are so important, where is the larger funding?

Answer: She prepares a PLB budget. In terms of the budget for operating grants – she is told the amount, which is \$14M. The PLB uses a grant framework when distributing these funds. There is not much flexibility in terms of that amount. Mari builds awareness of the actual needs based on a scenario spreadsheet. The scenario spreadsheet is based on the strategic plan, reporting, knowledge, partners who provide proposals, etc.

i.e. One member library participated in a Rick Hansen Foundation audit regarding the accessibility of their library facility. The audit report stated \$100,000. was required to bring their library up to accessibility standards. These funds were received through grant applications. Mari said she needs to hear these stories so she can communicate up scenarios such as this to her Manager.

PLB also has another budget, which is \$35,000. for professional development. These funds are shared out to various groups in the BC library eco-system.

Part 3 of Accessibility Act – how will organizations engage with disability groups to improve accessibility?

2. We have been lobbying for increased provincial funding. Has there been any discussion or news that this may be considered? Do you have advice for us to strengthen our argument for increased funding? What additional pressure can we exert that would be noticed? The funding situation is becoming critical for small libraries.

Answer: Mari confirmed that requests for conversations with local governments and the provincial government is making progress. The messages and local government conversations allow them (the local government funders) to be advocates to the provincial government. Mari encourages libraries Trustees to keep it up. The impact of COVID and use of data help to support the messages. Continue to make meeting invitations. How the \$14M within the PLB funding framework is distributed will be re-examined and re-allocated. See Public Libraries Branch strategic plan, the last point of their 4<sup>th</sup> goal – page 11. (“Work with library stakeholders to revise the grant system so provincial library funding is more transparent, flexible, sustainable and equitable.”)

3. Is there evidence to support the fact that public libraries are safe spaces, COVID-wise? This Board member is very happy that the government has supported full access to library patrons - albeit in a safe manner. It shows that libraries are an important service. Was the decision to keep libraries open based in science (ie: based on no known cases coming from public library facilities)? Is there information that Trustees can share with patrons who are feeling the decision was not a safe one? (Suggestion: the BC Centre for Disease Control may have this information.)

Answer: Mari said she was happy to connect directly with this Trustee afterwards on this specific issue.

4. Is there a move in government at the various levels to fund more and more library functions moving to a virtual platform? If so, will libraries face extinction?

A. A good general question. Local services help locally. The digital piece has high costs yet can reach more people across the province. The example of libraries helping people register and print their vaccine passport highlights the increasing and changing roles libraries play in their community and as a service to the public.

- Daneve thanked Mari for her participation and time.

4. Wendy Hurst moved and Mary Kierans seconded the minutes of April 24, 2021 meeting. Carried.

5. LDAG Chair report, Saara Itkonen (verbal)

- The LDAG met yesterday, and Mari visited with us. We discussed the Provincial Libraries Branch & COVID questions.
- As well, we met with Andrea Tubbs, the CBT consultant working with KLF to develop a marketing and advocacy toolkit. The purpose of this toolkit is to pool our resources, which will assist all-sizes of libraries with messaging about library programs and services.
- A round table discussion format for Directors highlighted three common positions: exhaustion setting in, difficult to be in public service during this time, but continuing to move forward with services we can provide in creative ways.
- In response, the KLF Board unanimously agreed that they would like to have their appreciation to the Library Directors and library staff for their work during this period noted in the meeting minutes.

6. 2022 Budget. Approval of the budget as presented was moved by Wendy Hurst and seconded by Kevin Atherton. Carried.

After a Board in-camera discussion, Laurie Riehl moved and Mary Kierans seconded that the KLF grant the ED four weeks paid vacation annually, effective immediately, and to provide a 2% salary increase, retroactive to April 1, 2021. Carried.

Break – 5 minutes

7. Chair Report – Daneve

- It is time to scan our strategic plan. There have been many changes - internal (new ministry) and external (COVID).
- Would like to do this review in February 2022, preferably in one day and in-person if safe, but otherwise over 2 half-days, 3 hours each time. Daneve is asking for Board member and Library Director participation. Perhaps even local government participation?
- Daneve noted we are struggling with KLF Board engagement and a lack of committee members. As well, the KLF needs a Treasurer to help with fiduciary oversight. The Executive Committee meets five times a year.

- Advocacy – we need to advocate to governments that libraries are picking up pieces that have been dropped by other agencies.
  - o Mary Kierans noted that Trustees have a voice that we are not even aware of.
  - o Connie Beranek and Mary Kierans volunteered to join the Advocacy Committee.
- Terry Welsh, Naksup Alternate volunteered to be the KLF Treasurer. Joanne Beetstra noted that the Treasurer role could be appointed from a member library.
  - o Connie Beranek moved and Kevin Atheron seconded the nomination of Terry Welsh as KLF Treasurer. Carried.
  - o *Note: Section 1.2.1 of the KLF Governance Manual states “Committees may be comprised of board members, members of the LDAG, KLF staff, staff and trustees from the Parties, and individuals as deemed appropriate.”*

#### 8. ED Report – Melanie

- In addition to my written report sent out earlier this month, I am:
  - Organizing two KLF-wide online author visits. The first one will be for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition release of “Not Extinct: Keeping the Sinixt Way” with authors Marilyn James and Taress Alexis on November 19<sup>th</sup>. The second author visit will be with Brian Thomas Isaac and his debut book “All the Quiet Places” in January 2022.
  - Working with other library federation managers for a late October opening of online Steps to Reconciliation training (province wide).
  - Contributing to the BC Libraries Co-op led “E-Resources Marketing Committee” to develop promotional materials for 3 online databases for use by all BC Libraries.
  - Part of a BC-wide committee, working to develop a “One Book for Reconciliation” program with Thompson Nicola Regional Library’s author in residence, Michelle Good, and her Governor General awarding winning novel “Five Little Indians.”

#### 9. Call for additional Executive Committee members - Daneve

- Daneve needs to step aside as Chair due to health reasons.
- Joanne has agreed to be the Interim Acting Chair until the end of the year. Joanne agrees we do need more Executive Committee members, and more participation when the various KLF committees ask for feedback. Joanne noted that some components of our governance structure gets in the way of board continuity, particularly when a Board member times out on their member board and they have to leave the KLF Board.
- Joanne thanked everyone for the opportunity to be Acting Chair.

#### 10. Strategic Plan – invitation to review & revise for 2022

#### 11. Closing activity - What item did you find of value from the meeting? Was there something you appreciate about the KLF?

- Connie Beranek (Sparwood Board): The meetings. The general knowledge that everyone else is going through the same challenges. It carries her for the next six months until the next meeting.

- Wendy Hurst (Castlegar Board): Request for a possible activity at a future meeting: to ask Library Directors to share one thing that the KLF has delivered or has done, that has been significant for their library.
- Anne Rogers (Invermere Library Director): An opportunity to thank the KLF for support and professional development opportunities. Melanie's support. Saara's leadership. Truly fortifying.
- Saara Itkonen (Creston Library Director and LDAG Chair): Our monthly meetings, all the ProD offered by the KLF which saves her own library money. Other professional organizations, such as the ABCPLD, is very large and often we don't have time to delve into challenges and discuss particular items we face. The KLF is such a supportive organization, it would be hard to get through the pandemic without it.
- Terry Welsh (Naksup Board Alternate): This is my first exposure to the KLF and I am impressed with the quality of conversation, especially with Mari Martin speaking, and the levels of concern and empathy from her with respect to funding. As well, the KLF strategic plan and seeing how the documents align with other libraries, and the provincial level, and the shared objectives.
- Mary Kierans (Grand Forks Board): Seconds what others have said. As awkward as Zoom meetings are, it is a credit to us all that we have managed to be clear, we are building on trust, that there is a clarity about what we are doing, and that our efforts are a culmination of things.
- Joanne Beetstra: Despite not knowing each other very well, we do genuinely want to work together.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:46am Pacific.

Future meetings:

April 30, 2022

Sept 24, 2022

April 29, 2023

Sept 30, 2023

April 27, 2024

Sept 28, 2024