



Inspire together & expand horizons

The purpose of the Kootenay Library Federation is to facilitate collaboration between member libraries, in order to foster and promote equitable and outstanding library services.

**Fall Board Meeting Minutes
September 24, 2022 – 10:30am Mountain**

Location: Days Inn, Cranbrook & Zoom (hybrid)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86780385284?pwd=eE5uSkdKZWFaZXV0U1FmbUVnNS9JQT09>

Trustees: Kevin Atherton (Elkford), Bev Bellina (virtual, Sparwood), Dave Evans (Greenwood), Randi Fjeldseth (virtual, Nelson), Jennifer Gawne (virtual, Salmo), Anne Heard (Kaslo), Joan Hedstrom (Creston), Wendy Hurst (virtual, Castlegar), Cathie Kearns (Kimberley), Mary Kierans (Grand Forks), Jan Kohlhauser (Midway), Frank Longo (Fernie), Daneve McAffer (Invermere), Alyssa Panning (Cranbrook Alternate), Laurie Riehl (Creston), Shori Smith (Nakusp), Jen Tagg (Radium), Gail Wakulich (Cranbrook), Terry Welsh (KLF Treasurer & Nakusp Alternate)

Regrets: Joanne Beetstra (Trail), Shannon Girardo (Beaver Valley), Abigail Steele (Rossland), Darcie Kevin (Penticton), Lynda Anderson-Thibault (Midway)

KLF Staff: Melanie Reaveley, Executive Director

Library Directors: Jim Bertoia (virtual, Sparwood), Stacey Boden (Rossland), Ursula Brigl (Cranbrook), Heather Buzzell (virtual, Penticton), Emma Dressler (virtual, Fernie), Alex Faucher (Elkford), Saara Itkonen (Creston), Samantha Murphy (Trail), Tracey Therrien (Nelson)

Call to Order 10:30am

1. Territorial acknowledgment, Ursula Brigl
2. Introductions
3. Approval of agenda
 - The Chair and Treasurer reports were removed from consent agenda.
 - A motion to approve the revised agenda was made by Mary Kierans and seconded by Cathie Kearns. Carried.
4. Consent agenda
 - a) Minutes of April 30, 2022 meeting

b) Report – Governance Committee, Joanne Beetstra

5. ED Report – Melanie spoke about her work that both supports the member libraries and highlights the value of being part of a library federation. Based on input, the KLF organizes and pays for professional development for library directors and staff. Similarly, under the Kootenay Libraries Programming banner, the KLF organizes and funds virtual author and speaker events that all member library patrons can participate in. Through our consortium purchasing policy, the KLF subsidizes database subscriptions and undertakes projects, research and surveys that library directors have requested. Following the CRRG grant award letter instructions, the KLF is collaborating with the 5 other library federations to offer professional development and virtual programming programs that have provincial reach.
6. Chair Report – The Executive Committee is working to introduce the practice of shared leadership. This was discussed at our April 2022 Board meeting. Shared leadership, rather than the conventional hierarchy, aims to use expertise around the table to spread out tasks with the goal of being more effective. Daneve described shared leadership as capturing collaboration, capitalizing on peoples' strengths, decreasing burnout, and encouraging natural leadership to emerge (succession planning). The Committee also hopes it will naturally encourage geographic representation across the KLF. Daneve shared that funding and advocacy will be the focus of the next KLF strategic plan. Work will begin on the plan next year.

Daneve summarized how we will work on the next KLF strategic plan. If you are interested in contributing, please register your interest with Melanie. Kevin contributed that ad hoc committee participation at the KLF can help your member library and vice versa. Board member and Library Directors can anticipate email communications and invitations in February 2023.

7. Treasurer's report, Terry Welsh
 - Financial detail will come out when we discuss the 2023 budget.
 - Pulled Treasurer report from consent agenda because it protects Board members in performing fiduciary responsibilities.
 - Grants inflate budgets yet they come with increased expectation. They are a false economy. Grants will be recorded separately in the budgets going forward.
 - We are ¾ of the way through the year and we have expended our 2022 budget. Our end of year reserve transfer will likely be higher than we anticipated.
 - Motion by Kevin to receive the Treasurer's report and seconded by Anne Heard. Carried.
8. 2023 budget, Terry Welsh
 - In the budget development process, it was recognized that it is beneficial to have grant income and expenses recorded fully. Grants have meant our YTD actuals are higher than budgeted. Costs to the end of November 2022 will be calculated and will be used to inform 2023 budget.
 - CRRG \$74k has helped us with regards to reserves transfers.
 - Our consortium purchasing policy states that the KLF will subsidize member library purchases by 20%. A deeper dive into this budget line will be done by the Finance Committee (Terry, Jan, and Melanie).
 - Consider how we can reduce Board meeting costs. Meeting in person and the opportunity to network must be cost effective.

- The Finance Committee will be surveying libraries to identify what should the KLF's core services be, considering our small annual operating grant. This survey will guide our longer-term budget planning and inform our strategic plan.
- A request was made that the Finance Committee create and share a multi-year financial forecast before we begin our next strategic plan process.
- Discussion about our equity and impact on reserves.
- Finance Committee will do some 3-5 year averaging. This is for trend identification.
- 2023 draft budget will be balanced through reserves transfer.

Motion that the 2023 Draft KLF Budget be approved in principle and that the KLF Executive be authorized to amend the Budget as necessary and execute approval of the finalized Budget made by Frank Longo and seconded by Kevin Atherton. Wendy Hurst, Randi Fjeldseth and Bev Bellina abstained due to lack of information and audio difficulties due to Zoom format. Carried.

9. KLF Board policies, Joanne

- Deferred until the April meeting due to Joanne's absence.

10. Governance Manual revisions, Daneve

- Reviews of the Library Act and KLF Agreement confirm we can proceed with a shared leadership model.
- Work has begun changing the governance manual.

Motion to move forward and make changes to the Executive Committee structure to have 1 Chair, 2 Vice Chairs, and 1 Treasurer was made by Laurie Riehl and seconded by Gail Wakulich. Carried.

11. LDAG Chair report, Saara Itkonen (verbal)

- No formal recommendations from the LDAG meeting.
- Our professional development presenter had to cancel.
- The LDAG discussed the freeze of provincial funding and one time grant funding.
- The majority of the day was spent talking about shared initiatives.

Lunch Break & Cranbrook Library tour

12. Provincial funding, Anne Heard

- Anne is the Chair of Kaslo Board and approaching her 8th year on her Board.
- She is concerned about small libraries and the expectations communities have.
- Appreciates the work Library Directors and Boards do with small budgets to support the amazing social infrastructure libraries are.
- Despite being in different Ministries, public libraries have never received increases in provincial funding for over a decade. Instead, libraries have managed higher expectations and increased reporting requirements.
- Municipalities have taken this issue to UBCM. The one-time provincial library funding receives attention in the media.
- Some MLA's, such as Brittny Anderson have met with the libraries in their riding.

- The BC Public Library Partners has submitted a request to the Provincial Budget Committee for 2023. Their request is for \$23m and inflationary increases.
- For some, the current situation is unsustainable. One library has a volunteer managing and supporting all the technology infrastructure, another has library staff doing the cleaning, and there are other examples.
- The funding is variable. For example, in 2018 the population of Kaslo decreased so their funding decreased. Yet in 2020 Kaslo's population increased, and funding remained the same. Seasonal population not a factor in funding.
- A discussion arose about the difference in provincial library funding levels between BC and Alberta. Here is a link to Alberta's 2022-23 funding [Public Library Board Operating Grants | Alberta.ca](#)
- Are we missing a piece of the advocacy puzzle? Anne has some thoughts to share:
 - o CRRG – while appreciated, grants require work to initiate spending and reporting.
 - o BC Museum funding – new funding for building was given. The project was shelved due to lack of public support.
 - o Should BC libraries go public with their stories and plight?
 - o Should public libraries advocate for their own budget line on the provincial budget? Would this ensure we would receive cost of living increases? How could we advocate for this to happen? This would make it more difficult from a public perspective for any future adjustments to be hidden.
- Requests for Anne to share her letter via KLF meeting minutes.
 - o Anne was encouraged to share her letter with BCLTA for amplifying the rural voice.
 - o The Mayor of Kaslo took Anne's letter to UBCM.
- Discussion. COVID response has highlighted an updated perspective of libraries. Libraries are beyond a resource; we are a social infrastructure that allows
- Fresh air centers, cooling centres, people come to libraries to feel safe. Expanded roles in society.
- In small communities, libraries are front and centre as a resource. How to communicate this to the politicians in large cities?
- Speaking as one voice will be most effective.
 - o The BC Public Library Partners are seeking donations to hire an advocate.
- Thanks to Anne for her presentation.

The following information has been added by Melanie for background.

- o The BC Public Library Partners group is composed of:
 - BC Library Trustees Association (BCLTA)
 - Association of BC Public Library Directors (ABCPLD)
 - BC Library Association (BCLA)
 - BC Libraries Cooperative (BCLC)
- o The Library Partners work together to:
 - increase awareness of the positive impact of BC public libraries and influence provincial public policy and funding impacting libraries and their communities.

If you have any questions about the work of the BC Public Library Partners please contact the BCLTA Executive Director, Jerrilyn Kirk, at jerrilyn.kirk@bclta.ca

13. Advocacy collaboration – Board Chairs & Library Directors from Kaslo, Nelson, & Creston libraries
- Description about their work together, arranging conversations with other library Board Chairs and Library Directors with their shared MLA.
 - They sent a joint letter when their MLA Brittny Anderson was elected, congratulating her, and asking for a meeting.
 - The letter mentioned stagnant funding. Many voices with the same message.
 - As a group, they brainstormed to plan their conversation using documents prepared by and shared by the BC Public Library Partners group. [These documents are found on the BCLTA website.](#)
 - They had a script ready, alternating who was going to speak to what issue. The meeting began and it was clear their MLA would lead the meeting and they adapted to this.
 - After their meeting, they followed up with another letter and a request to bring their message forward to her colleagues at the provincial level. Their other request was to meet again, and they have had a 2nd meeting.
 - A further letter has been sent, with a reminder of the core issues for libraries and a request for increased funding.
 - They are working to be a squeaky wheel in a very organized way.
 - Other libraries in the KLF who share a MLA could also collaborate in the same way.

14. Censorship and Public Libraries, Mary

- There has been recent press about public library censorship in the US, with collection challenges in both public and school libraries. Mary wanted to raise this issue as it can easily happen in Canada too.
- We can look at our policies and think ahead about how a library can respond to any challenges. Board members need to be able to respond to questions.
- Some examples
 - o [Chilliwack School Board](#) and a current challenge between trustees.
 - o Community standards as a phrase used by people who want to challenge items of a certain.
 - o Community member particularly concerned about DVD items. Now has become a library board member, they were acclaimed to the Board. How to work with this person?
 - o [Haliburton Public Library, Ontario](#) – Mein Kampf challenge
- Boards need to know the larger politics and helpful to hear about this topic at Board meetings from their Library Director.
- Library Directors are the best person to handle complaints. A collections policy approved by the Board supports this issue.
- Boards can offer new Board member orientation, Code of Conduct, Conflict of Interest have new members sign a Library Values document.

15. Closing activity: what do you appreciate about the KLF and what would you like to learn more about after today's meeting?

- Kevin – appreciates the stories and growing from the experiences of others. Would like to get involved in the strategic plan.
- Jen – appreciates each other and that everyone has pushed through the difficult time of the pandemic. Strategic planning and funding efforts.
- Dave – appreciates the KLF conversations about funding and would like to have an all-federations conversation about this. Would support the call to action about communicating.

- Frank – very happy with the direction the KLF is moving, more focused on the future. Sees collection policies as an emerging issue. Strategic planning is an area of interest.
- Cathie – echoes that KLF is a wonderful resource. KLF brings people together when needed. Almost at her 8 years and feels inspired to bring the advocacy efforts back to her board.
- Gail – likes the group of people and collaboration within the KLF. Watching the KLF evolve and become more focused and forward thinking has been enjoyable. Would like to hear more about censorship at her Board table.

Internet connection with Zoom participants was lost

- Joan – 1st time at a KLF meeting. Appreciates the work of the KLF, such as the Wage Report and the information that it offers as support for Boards. Enjoyed listening to the sharing the common goals of libraries.
- Laurie – Appreciate the focus of we are moving towards. Enjoys the strategic plan work. Sad that we are still talking about funding and hopes we can get on with what we love about libraries. Awareness of censorship issues in the media.
- Alyssa – learning more about the KLF as a new Cranbrook board member. Enjoyed the advocacy letter.
- Jan – likes coming together and supporting each other in the challenges. Nice that we can all take away something. Likes to support an argument with stats and facts and will contribute to the KLF that way.
- Anne – appreciates the structure of our regional and provincial supports. Without it the small rural libraries could not afford the resources. Is inspired by people with a like passion.
- Terry – appreciates the commonality of purpose at the KLF table. It is our strength. Involved with the Finance Committee yet the advocacy piece is near and dear to his heart and will support it.
- Shori – appreciative of the KLF resources and support and likes the diverse perspectives, being personal and sharing stories. May be able to help with strategic planning, with writing. Enjoyed the censorship talk and the advocacy letter from Anne.
- Ursula – taking away ideas about how she can provide her Board the opportunity to talk about the philosophical underpinnings of issues such as censorship.
- Bev – 1st KLF meeting, rich in information. Appreciated Anne’s passion and the censorship talk. Fiduciary responsibility very important to her. Taking away how important libraries are to their communities. Inequity and inconsistency of funding formulas – when we lobby as one voice, equity is important to include.

16. The meet adjourned at 2:55pm

Future meetings:

April 29, 2023 Grand Forks

Sept 30, 2023 Creston

April 27, 2024 West Kootenays

Sept 28, 2024 East Kootenays