



Inspire together & expand horizons

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

Meeting location: Seniors Hall, 210 8th Ave NW Nakusp

Trustees in attendance: Sue Adam (Nelson), Kevin Atherton (Elkford), Kathy Durnin (Creston alternate), Dianne Galloway (Castlegar), Donna Gibbons (Kaslo), Joan Hedstrom (Creston), Stephen Kelleher (Fernie), Mary Kierans (Grand Forks), Catherine McCormick (Trail), Debbra Mikaelson (Penticton), Alyssa Milne (Greenwood), Dan Moe (Kimberley), Mindy Smith (Beaver Valley), Terry Welsh (Nakusp)

Trustee regrets: Jennifer Gawne (Salmo), Chelsea Job (Rossland), Pierre Johnstone (Cranbrook), Claes Palmgren (Invermere), Rose Sharma (Sparwood), Shori Smith (Nakusp), Brenda Steer (Midway), Jen Tagg (Radium)

KLF Staff: Melanie Reaveley, Executive Director

Guests: Judi Gardner (North Slovan Community Library), Meghan Toal (guest speaker, BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner), Tom Zeleznik (Mayor, Nakusp)

Library Directors in attendance: Stacey Boden (Rossland), Chelsey Boersma (Midway), Ursula Brigl (Cranbrook), Taylor Caron (Salmo), Danielle Connolly (Radium), Cari Lynn Gawletz (Grand Forks), Tegan Madge (Kimberley), Claire Paradis (Nakusp), Sam Murphy (Trail), Tracey Therrien (Nelson)

Call to Order 10:00am

1. Territorial acknowledgment and welcome – Terry Welsh, KLF Treasurer
2. Meeting opening and welcome by Tom Zeleznik, Mayor of Nakusp
3. Guest Speaker: Meghan Toal, Engagement Advisor with the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner.
 - A copy of Meghan's PowerPoint presentation and her handouts are included in the meeting minutes package.

- Her discussion provided an overview of the Office, the BC Human Rights Code and human rights system in BC, and included information about the Hate to Hope Libraries Initiative.
- The human rights system and code in BC are aligned with the actions libraries take in supporting and uplifting human rights.
- The BC Human Rights Commissioner and Office recognizes public libraries are an aligned group for advancing human rights and they want to connect and work with public libraries.
- Access to information, spaces that are safe and protective havens = the great equalizer that is a library.
- The human rights Office was reinstated in 2019 after a 17-year absence.
 - o They have a watchdog/oversight role in BC.
 - o They are an independent organization, a public service body, and not beholden to sitting government. They are the accountability voice to and of the government.
 - o Situated in the human rights landscape. They exist to address root causes of human rights.
 - o Human Rights Clinic available to citizens. A separate organization than the Office of the Human Rights Commissioner.
- The Office has several upcoming virtual learning sessions over the next few months.
 - o The link to registration for their webinars is here: [Events from June 24 – March 26, 2025 – BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner \(bchumanrights.ca\)](https://www.bchumanrights.ca/events)
- Meghan discussed the protected grounds under the Code. They include age, family status, marital status, physical disability, mental disability, race, colour, place of origin and ancestry, Indigenous identity, sex, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation and religion.
 - o [Human rights in B.C. - BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner \(bchumanrights.ca\)](https://www.bchumanrights.ca/human-rights-in-b-c)
- We all have rights under the code. Some people are duty bearers and have responsibilities under the Code. As library trustees, you have legal and governance responsibilities. As library directors, you have legal responsibilities as a leader of employees. The creation of public communication materials, you have responsibilities under the Code.
 - o For more information, see the responsibilities under the Code as an employer page of the Office's website [Responsibilities under the Code as an employer - BC's Office of the Human Rights Commissioner \(bchumanrights.ca\)](https://www.bchumanrights.ca/responsibilities-under-the-code-as-an-employer)
- Meghan touched on the concept of duty to accommodate, which is the reasonable expectation of an employer to remove a barrier for equitable access and to prevent discrimination based on a person's identify protected by the Code. This is specific to a person and not a group of people.
 - o Duty bearers have a responsibility to ask and find out what access needs exist, for example.
 - o Duty to inquire and figure out what peoples' needs are.
 - o There are limits to accommodations. Each organization has a different threshold. There are limits under the law.
 - o Consequences – remedies. Some are financial, some are restorative, sometimes they are systemic (broad). Case specific.
- Addressing hate in BC and the Hate to Hope campaign.
 - o Hate is not new. The pandemic intensified it. Reported incidents rose over 100%.
 - o The Office wanted to take the learnings from the report out to the community and they created three foci for this:
 - Community mural projects

- Community echo events
- Immersive audio/visual exhibit (a 25-minute short film, reflecting the mural work and the Hate to Hope inquiry).
- There is a library sector specific webinar on July 4th 3-345pm, with Commissioner Govender. Please use this link to register
https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_brOuswUYTxeU9a5yDxdjAA#/registration

4. Award presentation

As President of the Association of BC Public Library Directors (ABCPLD), Cari Lynn Gawletz presented the BC Public Library Directors' Award of Excellence to Samantha Murphy (Trail Library Director).

This award recognizes the outstanding leadership of a public library director who is a member of the ABCPLD. It's presented once a year to recognize a member who has gone above and beyond advocating, innovating, and/or contributing to their local or provincial library community. What makes this award particularly special is that it represents the recognition of your peers - other Library Directors across the Province.

In making the selection for this years' award, Cari Lynn spoke to Samantha's qualities and achievements:

- Samantha is an innovator in the library director world, creating connections in the Kootenays and bringing big ideas to small areas.
- Sam's commitment to policy building and EDI training is inspirational and the Library Workers Symposium created opportunities for professional development and networking that hadn't previously existed.
- Sam is a wonderful collaborator and mentor; she's changing the landscape of library work in Trail and beyond.
- Samantha is a thoughtful leader – her staff and colleagues are thrilled to work with her. She always volunteers to take on tasks that support shared community initiatives like accessibility.

Congratulations Samantha!

Noon Lunch Break & tour of Nakusp Library

1:30pm meeting resumed

5. Small group discussions to assist KLF Executive in the development of its value proposition, to identify future directions and to inform KLF's 2024-2026 Strategic Plan. The discussions are summarized based on the three questions discussed.

Question one:

What do you feel is the intrinsic value offered by the KLF to your member library?

Group/table 1	Group/table 2	Group/table 3	Group/table 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Resources - Information - Networking, especially for isolated communities. - Advocacy with government. - Strength in numbers. - Tours of other libraries offer inspiration, ideas & meet with others to discuss common challenges. - Not alone on big issues like human rights. - Director networking, collaborations. - In-person meetings create contacts. - Common resources, i.e. legal support. - Consortium purchasing. - Spreading information about opportunities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - For directors, support (HR example), networking, resources, professional development, ED. - For directors, being connected to other directors, mentorship, especially for newbies “you’re not alone” - For directors, resources such as online workshops etc. - For trustees, networking, especially in person, feedback from meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Connection, support from each other. - Opportunities to meet as colleagues. - Otherwise isolating. - Mentorship and support. - pre-KLF, no mentors. Now variety, different backgrounds, much support. - ABCPLD best for large & regional libraries. KLF has commonalities in sizing. Same challenges & divisions. Small libraries have power, freedom & independence. Custom services to individual communities. - In pandemic, small libraries lead way to re-opening services. Large libraries watched and learned. Small libraries are agile, responsive & can pilot new services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network. Small isolated libraries. - Education, e.g. this mornings’ session. Also, Executive Director mentoring, supporting others, new Directors and Trustees especially. - Learning and community connections, esp. new staff. - Resources, e.g. Sitka. - Advocacy, lobbying and political connections. - Collaborative, e.g. Risk management and accessibility, legislation workshops.

		and other changes. - Information sharing.	
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Question two:

Are there present needs that your member library faces that are not currently being met? (by the KLF)

Group/table 1	Group/table 2	Group/table 3	Group/table 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Emergency preparedness plans. - Privacy concerns. - Technological vulnerability. - Coordinating strategy, education, security check lists. - Advocacy (strength in numbers) with government funders. - Funds for space. - Advocacy with CBT for KLF libraries together. - CBT upcoming speaker? - Partner with CBAL. - Employee & board recruitment. - Legal support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Board training. What does the library act mean and what is the board / individual board member's role in that? - Onboarding of new board members/ trustees, introductions to veteran trustees for orientation. - Orientation kit, maybe a YouTube video instead of all that reading material. - Refresher for well established boards who might be complacent or? - Directors shared programming. Summer reading program equivalent for than once a year. - More groups of touring authors, organization, posters, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Want 4 in-person meetings a year. - Staff included at times, too. - Scale of projects, emergency preparedness & management, Privacy legislation, Accessibility legislation, assessments, websites, PIA, templates for common needs such as ILS, storytimes, etc. - Succession planning for Library Directors. Set up for best success, board success too. - KLF to support staff changes. - KLF wide bookkeeper. - IT shared subscriptions to cloud backup. - ProD – education in IT for all. - Identify priority list of shared 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Space - Awareness of KLF, who to go to, political connections. - Shared policies, "Library of Policies", templates of core policies, surveys. - Shared benefits for Library Directors collectively through KLF. - Need a solid planning foundation, e.g. building maintenance funding. - Uncertainty of provincial funding. - Notification of upcoming grant operating opportunities and sharing. - Template for 5-year planning, library of date. - Shared data, outcome data. Provincial

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Tech hardware and tech training, shared IT services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> resources for the region. - Pool resources for certain services? - Balance with loss of autonomy. A Kootenay approach. Avoid regionalization. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> recommendations on sizes, etc.
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Question three:

Tell us what future needs your member library will face and how can the KLF best support your library in meeting those needs?

Group/table 1	Group/table 2	Group/table 3	Group/table 4
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - *Denotes KLF specific, other comments are general. - *KLF education, resources lists, tactics to mitigate. - *Provincial and federal advocacy for social issues. - *Resource sharing & integration. - *Survey re: IT capabilities across libraries & share baseline. - *Helpful wage survey. - Negotiating culture wars. - Fighting disinformation. - What do we do if government changes & funding disappears? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maker Lab – shared equipment and instructor for workshops. - Space planning consultants to advise on ways to make better use of what is often inadequate space. - Library of things – repair people. - Programs for youth, teens, older adults. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - See what we also said in question 2. - Money - Privacy - Accessibility - Emergency Management - Urban rural split yet same expectations. - Equitable services, access. - KLF representing member libraries as rural & remote with provincial level and higher levels of support. As a voice @ federation level. - Advocating for more funding. - Data gathered, how does PLB use it to the government? - PLB reporting, where does it go, 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Growth – size – salaries – staff - Technology support for staff & public. The widening gap. Staff training. - Complex patron needs & accommodations. Accessibility. - Safety of staff and public. - Divisive society. - Help with succession planning for Directors and Trustees. Pre-planning. - Recruitment

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to be proactive. - Social conditions esp. poverty & homelessness will increase. 		<p>what does it do for libraries?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Blue sky thinking – pension, benefits. - Living wages. Standard wages, equal pay, communicate that libraries are not government positions. Reality is an unequal environment across the province. Need a baseline. - Hold PLB accountable. - They ask for same service provision yet its impossible. How to communicate this. - Digital trends, more online, fewer books. 	
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Group conversation:

- Terry summarized the themes he heard as the groups presented their small group discussions:
 - o Sustainability
 - o Sharing of IT and information management services – even provincially?
 - o The Kootenays are a unique region, geographically
 - An east west divide?
 - o Value of in-person meetings for mentorship
 - o In terms of a strategic plan, these discussions will be referenced at a high level and will be part of the KLF’s annual work plan.
- The KLF Executive Committee welcomes additional members.
- The Library Director input and involvement is also needed.
- Ursula noted that as volunteers, she wished library trustees received remuneration for their work carrying the fiduciary responsibilities. She noted that despite what the Library Act states, this needs to be considered and conversations with PLB would be a help.
 - o Sue noted that the honourarium concept is growing at many boards, councils and associations.

- This practice could draw in a segment of the population currently unable to participate for various reasons (equity, empowerment, etc.)
- Mindy commented that small libraries need to practice telling our stories as the stories matter greatly.
- Terry mentioned his ideas for the present and future.
 - Suggests we need to change the language of how we speak about libraries as part of the social fabric of our communities and ensure that we articulate our community benefits.
 - Going beyond traditional, the pace of change opens avenues, AI (artificial intelligence) is an example.
 - Do libraries have a greater role to play with regards to critical thinking.
 - Cases for small libraries, perhaps create a benefits catalogue.
 - The future could be increasing togetherness while retaining autonomy. Small libraries could be collective on one level. Where large libraries look out for the smaller ones, and everyone is strengthened by combining resources.
 - The pandemic made it clear what services were valued.
- Ursula described the KLF as analogous to the EU.
 - The KLF does not replace individual governments or distinct identities.
 - Larger issues are coordinated.
 - This perspective allows libraries to focus on community
 - Regional libraries are represented by elected officials while independent libraries are represented by passionate and interested citizens.
- Mindy mentioned that it's important to strive for the equity lens. Not equality. We all need to look over the fence.
- The Public Libraries Branch is responsible for equity.
- UBCM is a great place for advocacy.
- Some Council interactions highlight they seem libraries as a cost centre. Advocacy work, telling stories, could change this to libraries as an investment in a community as a valued social asset.
- Geography must be exercised in this advocacy work (winter mountain passes).

6. LDAG Chair report, Claire Paradis (verbal)

- Yesterdays' meeting also included guest speaker Meghan Toal, Engagement Advisor with the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner.
 - She provided an overview of the Office, spoke about the BC Human Rights Code and human rights system in BC, and shared information about the Hate to Hope Libraries Initiative.
 - The LDAG will be convening online via Jamboard to discuss mis- and disinformation: where we encounter it in our communities, what form it takes, and how we can address it.
- We also heard about library incident debriefing practices with Becky Potter and Mary Graham of the Calgary Public Library.
 - After a disruptive or distressing incident in libraries, staff need and benefit from a process to restore a sense of self-control and set boundaries around other people's actions.
 - Becky and Mary explained the purposes of the debriefing process: it restores emotions to a baseline, restores a sense of staff agency, and noted there are lasting impacts to writing incident reports.

- We learned that not all staff self-identify as needing to debrief, yet other staff might see it in their colleagues.
- Following the two training pieces, the LDAG meeting included a member library round table where 5 new library directors were welcomed to the LDAG group: Alex, Blair, Chelsey, Danielle, and Sally.
 - Discussion around an in-person debriefing workshop for member library staff.
 - Extremely valuable to hear about the challenges that other libraries and library directors may be facing.
 - Wages, staffing, Enhancement grant, tech and education were all discussed.
- Our meetings foster collegiality and a strong sense of community to share ideas and resources. We also support and inspire each other.

7. Adjournment at 3pm

Upcoming Meetings:

Fall 2024 – Kimberley, date tbc

Spring 2025 – west Kootenays