

MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Regular Meeting

Minutes of Regular Meeting held on Monday, November 23, 2020 7:00 p.m. Virtual Meeting

Present from Board: Mr. Alick Siu, Chair
Ms. Margaret McGrory, Vice-Chair
Ms. Iqra Awan
Mr. Raymond Chan
Mr. Edward Choi
Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
Mr. Ben Hendriks
Mr. Anthony Lewis
Mrs. Pearl Mantell
Mrs. Lillian Tolensky
Mr. David Whetham
Mr. Jay Xie

Present from Staff: Mrs. Catherine Biss, CEO & Secretary-Treasurer
Ms. Andrea Cecchetto, Director, Service Excellence
Mrs. Diane Macklin, Director, Community Engagement
Ms. Michelle Sawh, Director, Administration & Operational Support
Ms. Debbie Walker, Director, Library Strategy & Planning
Ms. Polly Chan, Financial Analyst
Ms. Megan Garza, Senior Manager, Organizational Transformation
Mrs. Hilary Murphy, Manager, Planning & Reporting
Mr. Shaun McDonough, Research Analyst
Mr. Fred Whitmarsh, Manager, Unionville Branch
Ms. Verna Gilchrist, Manager, Technical Services and C3 Support
Ms. Pauline Cheng, Technical Services
Mrs. Angela Tse, Manager, Aaniin Branch
Mrs. Jennifer North, Manager, Angus Glen Branch
Mr. Jeff Skelton, LSA

Mrs. Susan Price, Board Secretary

Regrets: Councillor Keith Irish
Councillor Andrew Keyes

Guest: Rayanne Lees, CUPE Local 905/ Vice-President

1.0 Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

Mr. Alick Siu, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Moved by Mrs. Pearl Mantell
Seconded by Mr. Ben Hendriks

Resolved that the agenda be approved.

Carried.

1.1 **Declaration of Conflict of Pecuniary Interest**

None.

1.2 **Delegation**

None.

1.3 **Chair's Remarks**

CHAIR'S INDIGENOUS LAND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

We begin today by acknowledging that we walk upon the traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples and we recognize their history, spirituality, culture and stewardship of the land. We are grateful to all Indigenous groups for their commitment to protect the land and its resources and we are committed to reconciliation, partnership and enhanced understanding.

The Chair welcomed everyone and asked the Directors to introduce any "guest" staff members present as there were several and one non staff member from the Union Local.

Mr. Siu advised the Board that it has been recommended that we count votes at virtual meetings and asked Members if they are in favor of a motion to keep their hands raised until they can be tallied.

The Chair reminded the Board that this meeting is the last for 2020. Elections for the Chair and Vice-Chair will be held at the First Board Meeting January 25, 2021. Nominations can be made at the meeting and all current Board members are eligible to become a Board Officer.

2.0 **Approval of Minutes:**

2.1 Library Board Minutes October 26, 2020

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky
Seconded by Ms. Iqra Awan

Resolved that the minutes of the October 26, 2020 Library Board Meeting be confirmed.

Carried.

2.2 **Consent Agenda:**

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky
Seconded by Mr. David Whetham

Resolved that the Consent Agenda comprising Agenda items 2.2 to 2.4 and the same are hereby approved as written and the CEO of the Library is hereby authorized and directed to take such action that may be necessary to give effect to the recommendations as therein contained:

2.3 Declaration of Due Diligence by the CEO

2.4 Communication and Correspondence:

Carried.

3.0 CEO's Highlights:

The Chair called upon the CEO to comment on any content of the Highlights. Of particular note is the following:

Strategy and Planning

The next phase of strategic planning –the development of the Actions that will implement our Goals and Objectives is moving forward.

Three Action Teams have been formed to focus on each of our 3 Goals

- Reading to Transform
- Limitless Learning
- Community Social Cohesion

The Team process will draw upon staff experience and expertise to develop and prioritize potential Action projects and initiatives for the 2021 workplan.

Markham Centre Library: Community Engagement Project

Summary of relevant Information:

1. 2021 Proposed Capital Budget-Markham Centre Library-Phase 1 of 2
Community consultation regarding a future Markham Centre Library branch
2. 2019 Integrated Leisure Master Plan (ILMP) Update
Prioritize the establishment of a library branch (up to 20,000 sq. ft.)
3. 2017 Development Charges Background Study
There is funding for a Markham Centre Library
4. Markham Centre Secondary Update
Will guide growth and development in Markham Centre
5. Next Steps for the Markham Centre Secondary Plan Update
The Vision Report noted that public and stakeholder consultation is an integral part of each step in the process. Having developed a Vision and Guiding Principles for the Update, the planning team will generate development options for community feedback.
6. Markham Centre Library Community Consultation-Phase 1 and 2 Project Plan
will include the following steps:
 - Sociodemographic Analysis
 - Connect the Library Process to the continuing process of the Secondary Plan Update Project
 - Design and Conduct Library Community Consultation
 - Apply Consultation Findings
 - Develop Library Design Options

Question by the Vice-Chair on whether the survey for the Markham Centre Library area included all Markham residents or just those living in the community. Lots of discussion on the location of the library and a question about renting premises instead of purchasing.

Trends: Education Trends

As the education sector has been disrupted by COVID, impacts on student learning and motivation are becoming better understood as news articles point out:

KEY POINTS

- The current approach to managing the impact of school closures and disrupted instruction has overshadowed another problem: significant learning losses for children.
- Early international evidence suggests learning loss related to the pandemic is a very big problem
- Without intervention, lost learning is likely to have long-term and compounding effects on students' trajectories into adulthood. Likely outcomes are not just lower test scores, but more dropouts, students opting out of post-secondary, or arriving there less prepared and entering a brutal labour market with a weaker foundation for lifelong learning.

There were some additional concerns voiced about school closings especially for those in secondary school and post-secondary online classes.

Moved by Mrs. Pearl Mantell
Seconded by Mr. Edward Choi

Resolved that the report entitled "CEO's Highlight's, November 2020" be received.

Carried.

4.0 **Annual Monthly Policy Review:** 4.1 **Policy Governance Wording Review**

The Chair advised the Board that the policies are included in the package and Members should review and bring forward any proposed changes for discussion at the January meeting. The Board Secretary confirmed that any policies that needed to be amended due to the reduction in Board meetings would be prepared for approval at the January meeting.

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky
Seconded by Mr. Ben Hendriks

Resolved that all the policies under the Governance Process and Board-CEO Linkage sections of the Governance Polices and EL Polices are reviewed and that proposed amendments be presented to the Board at its regular meeting in January 2021 as required.

Carried.

5.0 **Internal Monitoring Reports:** (Compliance list of internal monitoring reports and discussion led by members)

5.1 **Executive Limitation: EL-1 General Executive Constraint** (Assigned to Mr. Anthony Lewis)

Mr. Lewis sent an e-mail to Board members and did not receive any questions or concerns.

AGENDA 2.1

The report provides the Board with a high-level description of the Library's general approach to carrying out its activities in the community. It confirms that Staff govern themselves lawfully and prudently, and their activities are in compliance with commonly accepted business and professional ethics, statutes, policies and contracts.

The Policy has been divided into seven sections and each heading has been addressed.

Mr. Lewis reviewed some of the content and advised the Board that he found nothing unusual or questionable.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL's practices relative to MPL's General Executive Constraint comply with the requirements of EL-1 policy.

Moved by Mr. Anthony Lewis
Seconded by Mrs. Pearl Mantell

Resolved that the report entitled "Internal Monitoring Report- Executive Limitation EL-1, General Executive Constraint" be received.

Carried.

5.2 **Executive Limitation: EL-2a, Customer Treatment**

(Assigned to Ms. Margaret McGrory)

Ms. McGrory advised the Board that this is a Key Policy for the Library. With respect to interactions with customers, or those applying to be customers, the CEO shall not cause or allow conditions, procedures, or decisions which are unsafe, undignified, unnecessarily intrusive, or fail to provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.

The EL lists six policy limitations and the CEO has provided evidence of compliance for all of them.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL's practices relative to MPL's Customer Treatment comply with the requirements of EL-2a policy.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
Seconded by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky

Resolved that the report entitled "Internal Monitoring Report- Executive Limitation EL-2a, Customer Treatment" be received.

Carried.

6.0 **Ends**

7.0 **Governance:**

7.1 **OLBA Update: Ben Hendriks**

Mr. Hendriks advised the Board that there is an upcoming meeting of the OLBA Council. He reminded the Board of the fall webinars mentioned last month and that they are still available on Learn HQ. The December 3 webinar is on **Inclusion, Diversity and Accessibility**.

AGENDA 2.1

Another reminder about upcoming elections, if any Board members are interested it is a three year commitment.

Ben encouraged all Board members to attend the virtual OLA Super Conference and that the Boot camp will be held on Saturday, February 6, 2021.

8.0 **Ownership Linkage:**

8.1 **Input from Board Members**

There were no reports from Board members attending events at this time.

9.0 **Board Advocacy:**

9.1 **Working Group Presentation to Council Report**

Staff reported that the Presentation to Council on Monday, November 16, 2020 was well received.

The 2020 presentation "Markham Library's Future" included the following components

- A brief summary of MPL's COVID journey
- Our digital "pivot" to online services
- MPL's Strategic Planning Process

Regional Councillor Jack Heath commented positively on a thorough and complete presentation. He had one question about Vision timelines to 2026. It was explained that this is a multi-year plan with Actions to be spread over the 3 to 5 years.

The Chair congratulated and thanked the Working Group which included Margaret McGrory, Raymond Chan, Edward Choi, David Whetham and himself.

Moved by Mr. Raymond Chan

Seconded by Mrs. Pearl Mantell

Resolved that the report entitled "Working Group Presentation to Council" be received.

That the Board approve the 2020 Strategic Plan, as presented to Council, and direct staff to move forward with Next Steps in the Strategic Planning Process.

Carried.

10.0 **Education:**

10.1 **Assessment and Outcome Measurement**

Staff explained that this was the last Education topic for 2020.

MPL has been a sector leader in the use of assessment and outcome measurement to evaluate the effectiveness and impact of its services. Program Evaluation is a relatively underdeveloped discipline in public libraries, including the large Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC) systems. MPL has invested strongly in staff resources and skill development in order to create the data architecture and business intelligence capacity to support evidence-based decision making and planning.

Following is a list of MPL's work in the area and projects currently in development.

- Data Collection

AGENDA 2.1

- Data analysis and Reporting
- Outcome measurement
- Research
- Building evaluation Capacity

The report is a summary of collected and analyzed data. It provides an overview of the type and scope of assessments and ensures they are tracking the right metrics.

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky
Seconded by Mr. Ben Hendriks

Resolved that the Board receives the report entitled “Assessment and Outcome Measurement.”

Carried.

Some discussion and clarifications on risk assessment and the Chair had a question on what Toronto Public Library is doing.

10.2 **OLA Super Conference 2021**

The OLA Super Conference will be held virtually February 3-6, 2021 with the Board Boot Camp scheduled for February 6.

Board members are encouraged to attend and there was a lot positive feedback from Board members who had attended in previous years.

MPL is investing in a group rate that will enable all staff and Board members to attend this year. Board members are asked to let the Board Secretary know if they are interested in attending.

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11.0 **Incidental Information:**

11.1 **2021 Board Meeting Dates and Agenda Planning Dates**

Moved by Mrs. Pearl Mantell
Seconded by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky

Resolved that the schedule of the 2021 Board meeting and agenda planning dates be received.

Carried.

12.0 **New Business:**

12.1 **Fine Free Recommendation for Children and Teens**

In order to advance the priorities of inclusion and connection, Markham Public Library's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan identifies the reduction of barriers to Library access as a strategic priority. One of the ways in which MPL proposes to do this is by introducing a fine free model for children and teen borrowers in the near term, and should this prove effective, eliminate overdue fines for all borrowers in the future.

There are four key reasons for MPL to eliminate these overdue fines:

1. Fines stand in the way of the core value of providing equitable library service, especially as they impact families with young children, newcomers and visible minorities.
2. Removing fines increases access to books, promotes lifelong literacy.

AGENDA 2.1

3. Fines are not a sustainable revenue model for public libraries.
4. Based on analysis and member activity reports, learning and lived experience from other North America libraries, implementing fine free policies typically increases circulation and the number of active library members.

Deputy Mayor Hamilton expressed concerns over how the Library would make up the shortfall for the loss of fine revenue. Staff clarified that any lost fines will be managed within the budget. [In other words, any loss in fine revenue will be covered by an equal reduction in expenditures.]

There were also concerns expressed that not having fines would lead to a lack of responsibility among young customers. Staff reminded the Board that if materials were not returned the child or teen would not be able to borrow more items and would be responsible for paying for the lost item. The majority of the Board were satisfied with the recommendation presented by staff.

Moved by Mrs. Pearl Mantell
Seconded by Ms. Margaret McGrory

Resolved that the Board approve the staff recommendation for a one year pilot project to eliminate overdue fines for children and teen borrowers as proposed, and that the CEO of the Library is hereby authorized, and directed, to take such action that may be necessary to give effect to this resolution.

Carried.

13.0 **Board Evaluation**
(None)

14.0 **In Camera Agenda:**
(None)

15.0 **Adjournment**

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky and seconded by Mr. Edward Choi that the meeting be adjourned at 8:25 p.m.