

**Approved Minutes  
Calgary Public Library Board  
Central Library Boardroom 0-11  
Wednesday, January 29, 2025  
5:30 pm**

**In Attendance:**

**Board:**

- Evan Legate (Chair)
- Kate Andrews
- Al-Karim Khimji \*
- Crystal Manyfingers \*
- Aaron J. Noga \*
- Councillor Evan Spencer \*
- Dana Saric \*
- \* Attended virtually

**Regrets:**

- Haritha Devulapally
- Gillian Hynes
- Margaret Wu

**Guests:**

- Elsa Gee, *President CUPE Local 1169*

**Administration:**

- Sarah Meilleur, *CEO*
- Tracy Johnson, *CEO, Calgary Public Library Foundation*
- Barb Gillard, *Acting Director, Visitor Experience*
- Laura Komianos, *Executive Assistant*
- Paul Lane, *Director, Strategy and Planning*
- Lisa Minnikin, *Executive Assistant*

**Regrets:**

- Mary Kapusta, *Director, Communications and Engagement*
- Heather Robertson, *Director, Service Design and Innovation*

**1. Treaty 7 Opening**

Evan Legate opened the meeting respectfully with a land acknowledgment. The Calgary Public Library Board opens all meetings by acknowledging the ancestral home, culture, and oral teachings of the Treaty 7 signatories which includes the Siksika Nation, Piikani Nation, Kainai Nation, the Îlethka Stoney Nakoda Nation, consisting of the Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Good Stoney Bands, and the people of the Tsuut'ina Nation. We also recognize the Métis people of Alberta who call Treaty 7 their home.

At Calgary Public Library we celebrate stories: the stories of the community and the land that we live on. We serve the community on Wîcîspa, Guts'ists'I, and Moh'kinstsis, which describes the gathering place where the Bow and Elbow rivers meet. We respect all people who share, celebrate, and care for the Treaty 7 territory of southern Alberta and we honour the original caretakers of the land who remind us of the ongoing histories that precede us. We recognize our shared responsibilities going forward to help bring everyone together on this journey of Truth and Reconciliation.

**2. Chair's Welcoming Remarks**

Evan Legate welcomed all members of the Board, Library Administration, and a CUPE 1169 representative to the first meeting of the new year.

### **3. Review of Agenda**

**MOVED** by Kate Andrews and seconded by Crystal Manyfingers that the Calgary Public Library Board approve the agenda for the January 29, 2025 meeting as presented.

Carried unanimously

### **4. Consent Agenda**

The consent agenda included the following items:

- A. To approve the minutes of the November 26, 2024 Strategy and Community Committee meeting
- B. To approve the Strategy and Community Committee Report from November 26, 2024
- C. To approve the minutes of the November 27, 2024 Board meeting

**MOVED** by Crystal Manyfingers and seconded by Kate Andrews that the Calgary Public Library Board approve the Consent Agenda as presented.

Carried unanimously

### **5. Business Arising**

#### **A. Alberta Library Trustees Association Report**

Legate advised the Board that the Alberta Library Trustees Association (ALTA) Board had not met since the last Library Board meeting; an update would be provided by Margaret Wu at the next meeting.

#### **B. Other Business Arising**

None.

### **6. Chair's Report**

Evan Legate thanked Administration, the Technology Team and Library staff for completing the Pathway to Recovery following the cybersecurity attack.

Legate and Al-Karim Khimji have been holding meetings with each of the Board members to discuss the year ahead and gain an understanding of everyone's priorities and overall capacity. Legate referenced a positive meeting with Councillor Spencer including updates on developments at City Hall and how best we can work with our largest funder.

Legate and Dana Saric conducted an exit interview with Councillor Kourtney Penner; a debrief of her feedback will be forthcoming as an update.

Legate commended Board members for the work done canvassing for time changes of Committee meetings to increase attendance and engagement. Board members were encouraged to attend the Board Retreat on Saturday, May 24.

## 7. CEO's Report

Sarah Meilleur presented operational highlights. The Library is at the mid-point of the 2023-2026 Strategic Plan and ended 2024 hitting a milestone with the highest membership in its history at 818,000, and the highest number of staff at over 840.

Meilleur also recognized the efforts of the Technology Team and public service staff who delivered services and continued to add services during the disruption of the cybersecurity attack in October. Over 2,000 technology systems and devices over 23 worksites in 10 weeks needed services to be restored. New public desktops will be launched in the first quarter of 2025 and new printing software will be added later this year in a process of ongoing improvement to public services.

There are four focus areas of our Workplan:

- Getting Ready for Growth
- Better Business
- Staff Engagement
- Continued Commitment to Innovation

Meilleur was pleased to confirm that the City has approved additional safety and security funding of \$750,000 for 2025 and 2026. The money will support additional positions and over 550 additional security hours; the support from the City is appreciated. The funds from 2024 helped address the challenging behaviours and circumstances in the community that the Library is facing by supporting the increased demands on Library staff and security and creating a more welcoming environment at Library locations.

Trends the Library is watching include Libby usage hitting a record high in 2024; the Library is among the top performing libraries in North America. e-books continue to be the most popular format for members.

Prices continue to rise, hold lists are large which is creating a challenge to make decisions with limited funds. Prices are also rising for physical books; the weakness of the Canadian dollar buying from the United States means we're able to buy less than before. Board members are invited to learn more by attending the April meeting of the Strategy and Community Committee which includes a Collections Spotlight Report that will touch on some of these trends and resourcing concerns.

The Library has an exciting role in supporting civic engagement across Calgary as our community prepares for Calgary's General Election and a federal election this year.

Reports from Library locations across Calgary show that teens and youth are connecting through programming and using library space furthering connection among this important group.

Meilleur also gave an overview of recent Library volunteer statistics, noting that 62% of volunteers are youth and over 1,100 new volunteers were onboarded in 2024.

The Board were asked to take action on three things:

- 1) Visit all Library locations featuring Indigenous Placemaking as part of their commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. New artwork has been installed at Fish Creek Library providing another reason to visit.

- 2) Increase the understanding of the legislation around Intellectual Freedom along with current trends. Administration will be arranging a session with James Turk from the Centre for Free Expression. The session will explain the legislation that we are bound to as a library system as well as a scan of the current environment.
- 3) The Family Reading Pick this year is *The Wild Robot*. Recently turned into a popular movie, extra copies of the book and related activities are available at locations to inspire family reading. Board members are encouraged to pick up a copy and take part.

**MOVED** by Kate Andrews and seconded by Dana Saric that the CEO's Report be received by the Calgary Public Library Board for information as presented.

Carried unanimously

## **8. Governance Committee**

### **A. Report of the January 8, 2025 Governance Committee Meeting**

Dana Saric presented the minutes of the January 8, 2025 Governance Committee meeting.

Cybersecurity was identified as one of the skills that should be added to the Board skill set that could benefit the Library going forward.

The Board Self-Evaluation Survey highlighted the theme of succession planning. With five Board members coming up for reappointment in 2026, it will be important to have a plan in place to support the Library, and to have individuals identified who are prepared to step into leadership positions.

Another theme was enhancing the opportunities for Board members to identify their own goals as a Board regarding the strategic priority of Truth and Reconciliation. This will be taken to the Board Retreat for further discussion alongside a discussion of board skills development, and engagement.

**MOVED** by Kate Andrews and seconded by Evan Spencer that the January 8, 2025 Governance Committee Report be received by the Calgary Public Library Board for information as presented.

Carried unanimously

## **9. Strategy and Community Committee**

### **A. Report of the January 15, 2025 Strategy and Community Committee Meeting**

Kate Andrews presented the minutes of the January 15, 2025 Strategy and Community Committee meeting.

To improve attendance, the Committee looked at the logistics of moving the start time to an earlier time of 3:00pm, keeping the same predesignated meeting dates. After consultation that change has been adopted. The change is intended to encourage other Board members who are not on the committee to drop in and learn from the incredibly valuable Spotlight Reports that are presented near to the beginning of the meetings.

## **B. Board Community Library Liaisons**

With the aim of building better relationships across a range of community libraries, and so Board members can gain a better understanding of the implementation of the Library's strategic initiatives, all members were assigned to a new group of libraries that they may not be familiar with. There was broad agreement with this approach and the new list was adopted.

## **C. Board Retreat Recommendations**

More information will be forthcoming after the next Board Retreat Planning Committee meeting.

## **D. Strategy and Community Committee Mandate**

An editorial change to the mandate removed the words *recommend and* from section i) "to recommend and steward the strategic planning process." for clarity.

**MOVED** by Dana Saric and seconded by Crystal Manyfingers that the January 15, 2025 Strategy and Community Committee Report be received for information as presented, the proposed Board Community Library Liaisons list be adopted as presented and the editorial change to the Strategy and Community Committee Mandate be approved by the Calgary Public Library Board.

Carried unanimously

# **10. Audit and Finance Committee**

## **A. Report of the January 22, 2025 Audit and Finance Committee Meeting**

Aaron Noga presented the minutes of the January 22, 2025 Audit and Finance Committee meeting.

In the past there was a requirement to maintain a line of credit with Royal Bank of Canada. The growth of the Library necessitated a revised approach and the introduction of the minimum adjusted net financial assets. This is a better method of managing the operating reserve policy. The 2024 year-in-numbers will be reported in March.

**MOVED** by Al-Karim Khimji and seconded by Evan Spencer that the January 22, 2025 Audit and Finance Committee Report be received for information; that the 2025 Budget Report, the Revolving Demand Facility, the 2025 Lifecycle Plan, the 2025 Minimum Adjusted Net Financial Assets, and the Audit and Finance Mandate be approved by the Calgary Public Library Board as presented.

Carried unanimously

# **11. Calgary Public Library Foundation Update**

Tracy Johnson gave an update from the Calgary Public Library Foundation.

The end of the year was busy as expected. Giving season was kicked off with the annual fundraising breakfast on Giving Tuesday raising \$66,000 which was a great start.

There was a direct mail push in mid-November that was in advance of the postal strike and raised \$217,000 from 1,200 donors.

In total over \$300,000 was raised in the end of year giving push, including \$42,000 worth of small donations on December 31, attributable to the power of charitable donations and tax season. The deadline for 2024 charitable donations has been extended to February 28.

A pledge of \$300,000 for residency programs will provide funding for three years. It is fantastic for these residencies with Elders, newcomers and Indigenous artists to have ongoing funding.

The last quarter of 2024 saw three legacy gifts come to fruition. It's a reflection of the work that's been done to date, raising awareness in the last 10 years.

A new initiative of stewardship webinars has proven to be successful. Each webinar will provide an update on a particular project supported by a range of donors. For example, there are hundreds of donors to My First Bookshelf; for the first event, 33 people registered to learn about it from Library experts.

The next Locked Library event is February 21, with 260 players already signed up!

Another Epilogue Society webinar will be held in March, date to be confirmed. It was very popular last year. A lawyer or financial planner will be brought in to talk about writing a will and legacy planning.

There are a lot of funding priorities that are being prioritized with the additional pressures being felt on the library system because of population growth and increased membership.

**MOVED** by Al-Karim Khimji and seconded by Kate Andrews that the Calgary Public Library Foundation Report be received by the Calgary Public Library Board for information as presented.

Carried unanimously

## **12. Board Workplan Review**

No changes were requested at this time.

## **13. Other Business**

None.

## **14. In Camera**

**MOVED** by Kate Andrews that the Calgary Public Library Board move in camera at 6:26 pm.

Carried unanimously

The Board dismissed all others from the meeting with the exception of Sarah Meilleur, Jim Chisholm, Barb Gillard, Tracy Johnson, Laura Komianos, Paul Lane and Lisa Minnikin.

**MOVED by Kate Andrews and seconded by Al-Karim Khimji that the Calgary Public Library Board rise and report.**

Report:

1. The Calgary Public Library Board approve the Public Library Services Branch Annual Survey as presented for submission to the Province of Alberta on behalf of Calgary Public Library.

Carried unanimously

**MOVED** by Kate Andrews and seconded by Aaron Noga that the Calgary Public Library Board move deep in camera at 6:38pm to rise and report.

Carried unanimously

The Board dismissed all others from the meeting.

**Background:**

The Board ad hoc Grievance Review Committee (Evan Legate, Al-Karim Khimji and Gillian Hynes) heard a grievance at step three with CUPE Local 1169 and Library administration on Thursday January 23, 2025.

**MOVED** by Evan Legate and seconded by Al-Karim Khimji, that the Calgary Public Library Board shares its determination as outlined below with CUPE Local 1169 and Calgary Public Library leadership:

2. The Board of Calgary Public Library has heard the position of CUPE Local 1169 and of Calgary Public Library in regard to a grievance raised by a CUPE Local 1169 member at step three. The Board Committee determined the grievance could not be resolved to the satisfaction of the grievor at step three.

Approved by 6  
Abstentions 0  
Opposed 0

Motion carried

**15. Adjournment**

**MOVED** by Evan Legate that the meeting be adjourned at 7:05pm.

Transcribed by Lisa Minnikin.

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Evan Legate  
Board Chair