



ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA  
PUBLIC LIBRARY DIRECTORS

## 2019 SPRING MEETING - CLOSED MEETING MINUTES

7 May 2019

Surrey Library, Guildford

### In attendance:

Naomi Balla-Boudreau	McBride	Todd Gnissios	Coquitlam
Jenny Benedict	West Vancouver	Scott Hargrove	Fraser Valley
Jim Bertoia	Sparwood	Karen Hudson	Salt Spring Island
Surinder Bhogal	Surrey	Beverley Rintoul	Rossland
Hilary Bloom	Squamish	Marc Saunders	Port Moody
Ursula Brigl	Cranbrook	Tracey Therrien	Nelson
Virginia Charron	Kitimat	Elizabeth Tracy	Whistler
Beth Davies	Burnaby	Jacqueline van Dyck	North Vancouver District
Christina de Castell	Vancouver	Susan Walters	Richmond
Cari Lynn Gawletz	Grand Forks	Wendy Wright	Smithers
Camille Ginnever	Mackenzie	Andrea Freeman	Senior Manager ABCPLD

### 11. Closed Session

#### 1101. Directors Only Forum

Scott proposed a directors only forum which would serve as a private communications vehicle for directors, and a repository to save discussions and findings. A member asked a question about FOI - the directors email listserv is subject to FOI, the forum would not be. There was general consensus that this was a good idea.

*ACTION: Create "communication guidelines" for Forum*

*ACTION: Add the Forum to the new ABCPLD website when it's created*

#### 1102. Changes & Relationship with Province

Scott shared how our relationship with previous Assistant Deputy Minister Paul Squires was going really well and he was really supportive of public libraries. With the recent change, Paul is now working in the

Premier's office.

Our new Assistant Deputy Minister is Jennifer McCrae. Scott had a quick 10 minute conversation with Jennifer and she told Scott that our role as libraries is "early literacy and truth & reconciliation." She is very focused on student achievement. Nothing in her bio resonates very strongly with what we do as libraries.

Scott has been fielding a lot of calls from around the province - from Boards (particularly political boards), council members, MLAs. There is a general feeling of discontentment, particularly re: the funding. There is a rumbling of municipalities wanting to put together a letter. We're not hearing any of this from Mari, this is a grassroots initiative. But we need to align ourselves, rather than be grassroots. We need to try to get ahead of it to coordinate our response and coordinate our advocacy actions.

A question was posed to the members present if anyone else had been hearing anything like this from their own Boards and municipalities? Surrey's Board has been talking about this and will support any joint action/response. Greater Victoria has already started working on a draft of a resolution. Burnaby put together a resolution in March. Vancouver will also support this response. Christina volunteered to draft a resolution and put together background information.

This government and the past government have said very clearly they want libraries to come with a unified voice. They want us to be aligned. We need a consistent message. They want to see 1 resolution that ALL libraries get behind and support.

A member asked if there is anything else we can be doing? Response that Nikki Hall (advocacy consultant) said we need to start from scratch. We have to be positive and focus our energy in the political sphere, not the operational sphere. We've been trusting people who may/may not have the tools or motivation to move things forward.

A few comments from members about how it's time for something different and that there's nothing impolite about political candour and being loud. Another member comment about how politicians listen to voters so they need to hear comments from voters. And that we need a cohesive plan moving forward and a new strategy. Another member comment about how when there are negative implications to funding, we haven't communicated these to the Minister. Those stories need to get to the Minister. They don't have to be angry letters, they can just be descriptive.

Member suggestion to repackage this information from the resolution into a public facing campaign. We are something that makes life affordable for families. We need people who care about libraries to speak up about this.

A member shared how they keep hearing from the Libraries Branch that "we can't advocate." They are operational, they're not there to advocate for us.

**ACTION:**

(1) All Directors - Send to Christina information like "this amount of money cut, = this many

*hours the library isn't open." We need to quantify. Send her information like "it costs us this much to be open 1 evening/week"*

- (2) Christina - frame a resolution around #1 affordability - supporting our most vulnerable in our communities, and #2 access to opportunity OR support for families (our pitch). And send resolution to all Directors.*
- (3) All Directors - Once resolution goes out, share and have the conversations with your Boards and Council.*
- (4) All Directors - Make sure your Councillors are in room to endorse the resolution*