



## Annual General Meeting, Thursday, June 23, 2022 - **DRAFT MINUTES**

**Via Zoom video conference**

### **Attendees:**

**Member Delegates/Alternates:** Diana Davidson (Alberta Public Library Services Branch), Ciara O'Kelly (BC Legislative Library), Rina Hadziev (BC Library Association), Beth Davies (Burnaby PL), Wanda Davis (Cariboo Regional District Library), Kimberly Partanen (Castlegar PL), Kayla MacDonald (Chetwynd PL), Chris Vriesema-Magnuson (College of Physicians & Surgeons BC), Suzanne Rackover (Emily Carr University of Art + Design & Council of Post-Secondary Library Directors), Ursula Brigl (Cranbrook PL), Alexandra Faucher (Elkford PL), Danika Andrews (Fort Nelson PL), Karli Fisher (Fort St. James PL), Dean Kelly (Fraser Valley Regional Library), Cari Lynn Gawletz (Grand Forks PL), Melanie Reaveley (KLF), Toby Mueller (Lillooet and Area PL), Heidi Rees (Manitoba Legislative Library), David Christensen (Manitoba Public Library Service), Tracey Therrien (Nelson PL), Jorge Cardenas (New Westminster PL), Thomas Knutson (North Central Library Federation / North East Library Federation), Deb Hutchison Koep (North Vancouver City PL), Dawna Turcotte (Northern Lights College), Heather Buzzell (Penticton PL), Rebecca Burbank (Powell River PL), Austin Matheson (Prince George PL), Michael Burris (Interlink), Charlene Tweed (Red River PL), Teresa Wright Eastley (Saskatchewan Provincial Library), Jennifer Wilson (Surrey PL), Cheryl Sinclair (University College of the North), Shirley Lew (Vancouver Community College), Ben Hyman (Vancouver Island Regional Library), Dana McFarland (Vancouver Island University), Julia Brewster (Vancouver Public Library), Jennifer Barg (Vanderhoof PL), Sarah Felkar (West Vancouver Memorial Library), Vicki Kyvrikosaios (YMCA Greater Vancouver Child Care Resource & Referral)

**Non-voting attendees:** Mari Martin (BC Public Library Services Branch), Daphne Wood (Greater Victoria PL), Lenora Lee (KPMG), Chris Reimer (North Vancouver City PL), Kevin Stranack (Simon Fraser University)

**Co-op Staff:** Kevin Millsip (executive director), Ayesha Ali, Christine Burns, Sharon Herbert, Scott Leslie, Daniella Levy-Pinto, Jennifer Pringle, David Ryland, Tami Setala

**1. (10:30am Pacific) Call to Order and Land Acknowledgement - (Beth Davies, Chair)**

Quorum (i.e. minimum 24 member delegates or alternates) was noted.

**2. Opening remarks – Beth and Kevin**

Kevin shared some housekeeping details, including procedures for using the Chat function to vote on the three motions on the agenda

**3. Agenda, *motion for approval***

Motion to approve the agenda of the 2022 Annual General Meeting.

Moved by: David Christensen; Seconded by: Kayla Macdonald

Carried - Unanimous

**4. Minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting, *motion for approval***

Motion to approve the minutes of the 2021 Annual General Meeting

Moved by: Deb Hutchison Koep; Seconded by: David Christensen

Carried - Unanimous

**5. Reports for information:**

**5.1. Verbal Chair's Report (Beth Davies) –**

The year since our last AGM in June 2021 has been another extraordinary period, for co-op staff and for members. The reports and business of our AGM today remind us of the important work that we do together in a cooperative way in ordinary and extraordinary times. We're carrying on differently, but we are carrying on, with the services and technologies of the Co-op offering key supports to members in difficult times. I'm glad to be here with everyone today,

celebrating what we can do together, and introducing members who are reporting on co-op activities.

As a Board, we have spent the past year beginning to work on a member engagement strategy and an anti-racism plan, in line with commitments in our strategic plan. Both these actions have taken more time than we anticipated, but I'm happy to report that both will begin in earnest this summer.

The BC Libraries Cooperative has been around since 2009. We've changed and grown a lot since then. We've begun a process to look at Coop finances and services to ensure that we are sustainable and that we meet the needs of you, our members. We need to ensure we're engaged with the members both to maintain the historical understanding of what led to the Co-op's formation, what values ground our approach and services, and how that shapes how we move ahead. Some of our services are built on technological foundations which are now over a decade old, this brings with it a number of challenges for our work. As we plan ahead, we'll be involving members in discussion about our services, how they need to be resourced, and how we fund them. Our goal is to have these conversations now, so that a few years down the road, the Co-op is in the best position it can be in regards to our technology, funding base and sources and staffing. We'll be sharing more on this process and timeline as the strategy comes together.

This past year, the power of collaboration and cooperation has resulted in some significant wins for our sector. The BC provincial government recently provided \$8M in one-time covid relief and recovery funding to the public library sector in BC. This funding is the result of many years of collective advocacy, and the focused efforts of the BC Public Library Partners, of which Co-op staff and board are a key part. A lot of hands helped to get us to this spot - supporters and users of libraries, allied and supportive organizations, CUPE BC and other labour leaders who supported our advocacy asks, city councillors across the province, Ministry staff at different levels, MLA's from all parties in the legislature and the three Ministers who have had responsibility for Public Libraries in BC over the past five years. Although the one-time funding is welcome, we remain committed to addressing the ongoing funding deficit that the public library sector has faced since 2010. I look forward to working with those who've been part of this ride so far, and others who will join, to make that goal a reality.

On the federal front, Co-op staff have been working closely with staff from the Centre for Equitable Library Access (CELA) to advocate successfully to stop proposed cuts to federal funding for the work of NNELS and CELA. In addition, we convinced the federal government to create a brand new funding program called the Equitable Access to Reading Program, that will fund the essential work ensuring access to reading materials for people in Canada with print disabilities. The new program will be in place in two years' time and promises to provide \$7M annually in funding.

Finally, I would like to take a moment to highlight the work of Coop staff. Kevin will talk in a bit about specific achievements across the broad work that staff are engaged in. I want to share the board's thanks for the way that staff have continued to support members over the past year. At a time when technology is more vital than ever in providing access to critical information, and when vulnerable members of the communities that libraries serve face growing digital inequity, the work that Coop staff do is critically important. Staff have embraced new projects, coped with rollercoasters of threatened funding cuts and shortfalls, all while navigating the ongoing pandemic. Coop staff are the best. Please join me in giving them thanks.

## 5.2. BC Public Library Partners Update (Rina Hadziev, BCLA)

For those who don't know me, I'm Rina Hadziev, Executive Director of the British Columbia Library Association, or BCLA, and I'm grateful to be joining you from the traditional and unceded territories of the ləkʷəŋən speaking Peoples, specifically the Songhees and Esquimalt Nations.

I'm happy to be providing an update from the BC Public Library Partners. The Partners are made up of 4 organizations: BC Library Association (BCLA), Association of BC Public Library Directors (ABCPLD), BC Libraries Cooperative (BCLC), BC Library Trustees Association (BCLTA)

We work together to present a united voice for BC's public library community to senior levels of government, in order to increase awareness of the positive impact of BC public libraries and influence provincial public policy and funding impacting public libraries and their communities.

For the past several years, the Partners have been focusing on advocating for increased annual funding from the provincial government. Since 2020, we have had a consistent message to the BC Government: BC public libraries are essential for healthy and vibrant communities; they are an integral part of the social safety net; they help support and advance government priorities,; and provincial funding needs to be restored to where it was before the cut in 2009, and then adjusted annually to keep up with inflation. This would equal \$23 million in 2023.

On June 7th, we presented to the Select Standing Committee on Finance, and received a positive and engaged reception. We hope and anticipate they will support our recommendations, although that does not mean they will actually be included in the budget.

In September we are going to the Union of BC Municipalities 2022 Convention in Whistler, where we will hold an open house with the support of the Whistler Public Library and Fraser Valley Regional Library. UBCM is always a good opportunity to engage with municipal politicians, who are important and powerful

advocates with the provincial government. It is also an opportunity to highlight the value and importance of libraries for the MLAs in attendance, including our minister. Last year we attended the virtual convention, and are looking forward to the increased opportunities for networking that result from an in-person event.

We heard at last year's UBCM that many municipal politicians felt there should have been a resolution about libraries, so this year we supported libraries in working with their municipal councils to put forward resolutions affirming the value and importance of libraries and supporting our request for improved annual provincial funding.

We're also excited to share that this year, the BC Chamber of Commerce has also passed a resolution in support of increased provincial funding for libraries, recognizing the vital role of libraries in supporting businesses and strengthening community. Having the formal support of the Chamber will be a significant asset in our ongoing advocacy with the provincial government, and we're thankful to Jerrilyn, Executive Director of the BCLTA, who led this effort.

On an ongoing basis, we're having positive and promising conversations with the new minister of Municipal Affairs, Nathan Cullen, and ministry staff. We're also exploring other advocacy avenues and options, as we know there are many sectors competing for funds but we also know we have a compelling case.

Over the past 2 years, we've learned more about government relations and gained a better understanding of what is really required to achieve improved provincial funding for public libraries. We've also had some successes. In 2021 libraries received one-time funding of \$3 million for digital improvements, and most recently in 2022 libraries received one-time funding of \$8 million for covid relief and recovery. This most recent funding was in response to a case for one-time funding that the BC Public Library Partners put forward, working with the Public Libraries Branch to advocate for library funding as communities strive to recover from the impacts of covid, and , as Beth said, reflects the work of many advocates and stakeholders.

We're proud of those successes and their impact on libraries, but we know that this kind of one-time funding is not a permanent solution. As Kevin said to the Select Standing Committee this year about the one-time funding, "These funds are a very welcome respite from what has been, for many of our members, an ongoing annual exercise in belt-tightening, in looking for more efficiencies where none exist — because of previous rounds of belt-tightening and, in too many cases, cuts to programs and services."

You'll note we've shifted our messaging somewhat, to highlight that, while libraries are incredible value for money, the funding they are receiving is not enough, and that is having a negative impact on libraries and their communities. We have shifted from "libraries are doing more with less" to "libraries are having

to make difficult cuts and reductions in service but can and will do more with more”.

All of the BC Public Library Partners are immensely grateful to all the people in the library sector who do amazing work throughout BC. While we do formal advocacy, none of that would be possible without the daily impact libraries have on the lives of the people in their communities.

#### 5.2.1. Executive Director’s & Staff Reports (Kevin Millsip, Co-op Staff)

#### 5.2.2. Annual Report (written, included in agenda package)

Kevin Millsip thanked everyone for attending the 3<sup>rd</sup> AGM via video conference. We’ve heard from many members that this method facilitates participation. Kevin expressed thanks to staff, Board and members for working with us.

Co-op managers Tami Setala, Sharon Herbert, Scott Leslie, Daniella Levy-Pinto and Ayesha Ali provided verbal updates for their respective service areas

#### 5.2.3. Verbal Strategic Planning update

Kevin provided updates on the Co-op’s strategic planning initiatives, including the member engagement strategy.

### **6. Financial matters:**

#### 6.1. FY21/22 Audited Financial Statements, for information (Lenora Lee, KPMG)

Lenora reviewed highlights from KPMG’s report

#### 6.2. Appointment of the auditor (KPMG) for FY 22/23, *motion for approval*

Moved by: Deb Hutchison Koep; Seconded by: Dawna Turcotte

Carried - Unanimous

#### 6.3. FY22/23 working budget, for information (included in agenda package)

### **7. Governance matters:**

#### 7.1. Appointment of Board of Directors

#### 7.1.1. Introduction of nominee Kevin Stranack and brief comments

Kevin Stranack, Director of Operations, Public Knowledge Project, Simon Fraser University introduced himself

#### 7.1.2. Declaration of Acclamation of Nominee to the Board: Kevin Stranack

### **8. Recognition of Service**

8.1. Dana McFarland – Beth thanked Dana for her service to the Board. Dana joined the Board in 2016 and served as Board Chair from 2018 to 2020. Dana also served on BC Public Library Partners. We've appreciated Dana's thoughtfulness and her insights and that her approach to her role on the Board was driven by values. In recognition of her service, the Board presented Dana with a gift certificate and donation to the Nanaimo Pottery Store as well as one of the rare Co-op K-way jackets.

8.2. Shirley Lew - Beth welcomed Shirley Lew as Incoming Board Chair. Shirley is looking forward to working with the Board and with Deb Hutchison Koep as vice chair. Shirley expressed thanks to Beth for her leadership as Chair, noting that she has led thoughtfully, particularly around EDI and member engagement initiatives and in supporting everyone in Partners. Beth has been a steady and calm presence leading the Board and supporting Co-op staff, exemplifying values-based leadership, coupled with concrete action.

### **9. Closing Remarks**

9.1. Beth thanked everyone for participating today, noting that BCLC occupies a unique space in the community As a member-owned and community-driven initiative, it provides the resources and knowledge to investigate and create what is possible.

10. Adjournment – 11:51am Pacific