

MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

Regular Meeting

Minutes of Regular Meeting held on Monday, June 28, 2021 7:01 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
Mr. Ben Hendriks
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
Ms. Debbie Walker, Director, Library Strategy & Planning
Ms. Megan Garza, Senior Manager, Organizational Transformation
Mrs. Hilary Murphy, Manager, Planning & Reporting
Mr. Patrick Pan, Manager, Facilities & Workplace Safety
Mrs. Anthea Bailie, Manager, Collections & Technical Services
Mrs. Susan Price, Board Secretary

Regrets: Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton
Councillor Keith Irish
Councillor Andrew Keyes

Guests: Mr. Morgan Jones, Commissioner of Community Services

1.0 Call to Order/Approval of Agenda

Mr. Alick Siu, Chair called the meeting to order at 7:01 p.m.

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

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 asked the CEO to introduce our guest, Mr. Morgan Jones, Commissioner of Community Services. Mrs. Biss noted that Mr. Jones has been a long time senior person at the City of Markham, has a reputation for being innovative and is a fabulous person! MPL is very happy to welcome him as the new Commissioner of Community Services and is looking forward to working together. Directors were also asked to introduce any "guest" staff members present.

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 asked for volunteers to serve on the Working Group for the presentation to Council, fall 2021. Preparatory meetings will begin in September. Group Members for 2021 are Mr. Alick Siu, Chair, Ms. Margaret McGrory, Vice-Chair, Mrs. Lillian Tolensky, Mr. Raymond Chan and Mr. Edward Choi.

2.0 Approval of Minutes:

2.1 Library Board Minutes May 31, 2021

Moved by Mr. Ben Hendriks
Seconded by Mr. Raymond Chan

Resolved that the minutes of the May 31, 2021 Library Board Meeting be confirmed.

Carried.

2.2 Consent Agenda:

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky
Seconded by Ms. Margaret McGrory

Resolved that the Consent Agenda comprising Agenda items 2.2 to 2.4.4 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:

2.4.1 urbanlibraries.org: libraries can help local businesses during the pandemic
<https://www.urbanlibraries.org/blog/5-ways-libraries-can-help-local-businesses-during-the-pandemic>

2.4.2 MarkhamReview.com: National Indigenous History Month
[National Indigenous History Month – Markham Review](#)

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2.4.3 The Quebec Public Library Association: Thank you to MPL Staff

2.4.4 Markham50 Celebrates People & Places June 22, 2021

Carried.

3.0 **CEO's Highlights:**

The Chair called upon the CEO for her comments on the June Highlights. Mrs. Biss noted the following items contained in the report:

- **City of Markham:2022 Budget Schedule**

The Council schedule for the 2022 Budget has been approved. After initial meetings with staff as required, the draft presentation for the Public Meeting will go to General Committee November 15, 2021. The Public Meeting will be held November 23, 2021. Council approval will happen December 7, 2021 and the Press Conference December 8, 2021.

Staff will be working on the budget over the summer.

- **Milliken Mills Community Centre Lobby Enhancement Project:**

A significant project milestone has been reached with MPL's sign-off of the schematic design. Enhancements include a 5-bin sortation system along with a customer induction unit. The design maintains the number of washrooms as required by building code. In order to achieve the desired layout, the architect has re-located two washrooms (one unisex and one accessible) to the other side of the library lobby.

- **Post-COVID Consumer Trends**

On June 11, 2021 Ontario moved to Step One of the province's ***Roadmap to Reopen*** which includes opening of non-essential retail, outdoor dining and outdoor attractions. Consumer trends in the retail, hospitality and tourism sectors suggest that Canadians are embracing the return to "in-person" experiences and are looking for opportunities to re-engage with society, indoors and out. Trends suggest there is also a desire to return to more normal library service, yet for some this may be met with some anxiety.

Customer satisfaction as assessed by the Virtual Services survey continues to be high despite the reduced services with a 93.6% satisfaction rate. Customer visits also increased quarter over quarter by 82.1%.

The Vice-Chair asked if the CEO believed that there was some trepidation from Markham residents and reticence to reenter Library space. The CEO conceded that it may take Markham residents longer to get back to "normal", until such time there are a lot of virtual programs available to residents.

Some community centre branches (Cornell, Aaniin) will have a delayed reopening due to utilization as vaccination sites.

Moved by Ms. Iqra Awan

Seconded by Mrs. Pearl Mantell

Resolved that the report entitled "CEO's Highlight's June 2021" be received.

Carried.

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- 4.0 **Annual Monthly Policy Review**
(To be undertaken at the January meeting)

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

- 5.1 **Executive Limitation: EL-2c Budgeting/Forecasting**
(Assigned to Ms. Iqra Awan)

Ms. Awan received no questions or concerns from Board members and there were none during the meeting.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL's practices relative to MPL's Budgeting/Forecasting comply with the requirements of EL-2c policy.

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

Resolved that the Board receives the report entitled "Internal Monitoring Report-Executive Limitation, Budgeting/Forecasting".

Carried.

- 5.2 **Executive Limitation: EL-2h Community Relations**
(Assigned to Mrs. Pearl Mantell)

Mrs. Mantell reviewed the report EL-2h Community Relations. She sent an e-mail to Board members and did receive one request for clarification and staff was able to respond promptly and fully. There were no questions during the meeting.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL's practices relative to MPL's Community Relations comply with the requirements of EL-2h policy.

Moved by Mrs. Pearl Mantell
Seconded by Mr. Raymond Chan

Resolved that the report entitled "Internal Monitoring Report, Executive Limitation, EL-2h Community Relations" be received.

Carried.

- 5.3 **Executive Limitation: EL-2i Compensation and Benefits**
(Assigned to Ms. Margaret McGrory)

Ms. McGrory advised that the purpose of this report is to provide the Board with an overview of MPL's practices with regard to employee compensation and benefits.

Ms. McGrory reviewed the report in full and found it to be complete and compliant. She contacted the Board and did not receive any questions or concerns and there were none at the meeting.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL's practices relative to MPL's Compensation and Benefits comply with the requirements of EL-2i policy.

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

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Resolved that the report entitled “Internal Monitoring Report-Executive Limitation EL-2i, Compensation and Benefits” be received.

Carried.

5.4 **Executive Limitation: EL-2j Communication and Counsel to the Board (March 2021 to May 2021)**

(Assigned to Mr. Edward Choi)

Mr. Choi reviewed the report EL-2j, Communication & Counsel to the Board (March 2021 to May 2021) and found it to be complete and satisfactory. He did not receive any questions from Board members and there were none from the floor.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL’s practices relative to MPL’s Communication and Counsel to the Board comply with the requirements of EL-2j policy.

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

Resolved that the internal monitoring report entitled “Executive Limitation: EL-2j Communication & Counsel to the Board (March 2021 to May 2021)” be received.

Carried.

6.0 **Ends:**
6.1 **Strategic Plan Update**

Staff informed the Board that this update report to the Board regarding the status of MPL’s 2021 Strategic Work plan is an optimistic one at this time. As vaccination momentum continues, and case numbers decline, there is increasing hope for Step Two reopening and a return to pre-pandemic life (or at least close to it). There is still uncertainty however and MPL is maintaining strong standards for public safety.

Highlighted recent accomplishments are:

- Launched a new and improved Kids page on our website. Includes resources that support virtual curriculum
- Completed launch of fine free cards for children and teens
- Completed launch of online library card registration
- Launched VIRTUAL Summer reading Camp running from Jul 1-Aug 17. Designed to encourage children to continue reading over the summer, participants socialize and engage in activities and games at virtual meetups. Includes author visits in collaboration with other libraries in York and Durham Region
- Launched curbside 3D printing Service
- Staff have signed off on the schematic design of Milliken Mills renovation. Detailed design in process. Staff award report for sorter (and other life cycle replacement equipment) in progress.

Corporate Strategic Projects

- There are a number of resource-intensive projects in terms of staff hours required. Challenges include how to configure the financial and other systems to meet the needs of all departments
- Recent internal consultation meetings included 7015 Yonge Street. Upcoming: Markville Secondary Plan Study. ILMP 2019 is used as reference point for studies

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- Establish process for evaluating public and private sector partnerships and business opportunities Project launch Q3

The Chair asked for a clarification on the Brain Fuse program which is an online tutoring program available to students JK through to College. This platform is gaining in popularity and there was a question as to where tutors were sourced from. Staff clarified that “Brain Fuse” is a subscription based program and the tutors are provided through the service and it is all done virtually.

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

Resolved that the report “Strategic Plan Update” be received.

Carried. .

6.2 **MPL Strategic Plan: Tri-Fold Brochure Version**

Staff explained that the brochure contains an abridged version of the Strategic Plan which will be available to the community, to partners and other key stakeholders. It outlines, at a high level, how the Library plans to achieve the priorities identified by the community and also contains MPL’s Vision, Mission and Goals. The full Strategic Plan will be available on the MPL website as well as the brochure version.

Moved by Ms. Iqra Awan
Seconded by Mr. Ben Hendriks

Resolved that the board accepts the MPL Strategic Plan: Tri-Fold Brochure Version.

Carried.

7.0 **Governance:**

7.1 **OLBA Update: Ben Hendriks**

Mr. Hendriks did not have a lot of news to pass on at this time. At the last meeting they formalized presentations etc.

OLBA focus going forward will be on strategic recruiting for future Library Boards (fall 2022)

Ben confirmed that the OLA Super Conference will be virtual again for 2022.

7.2 **Delegation of Board’s Authority over the summer**

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

Resolved that responsibility for all Board decisions over the summer be delegated to the Board Chair in consultation with the Vice-Chair;

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And that if the Chair or Vice-Chair cannot be contacted in a reasonable time frame, a designated Board member will be consulted.

Carried.

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**

10.0 **Education:**

10.1 **Markham Centre Planning**

Staff provided the Board with a comprehensive overview of the Markham Centre Secondary Plan. Key areas of feedback Include:

- Building forms and heights
- Forming a Civic District; near the transit node, anchored by civic facilities (public square, central library, community centre, museum, performing arts centre) retail and public art
- Transit, walking and cycling
- Connected neighborhoods
- Parks and green spaces

2021 Action Plan for a Markham Centre Library/Central Library

- Community Consultation
- Engage with manager of the Flato Markham Theatre to explore the potential for a co-location to create a cultural complex (theatre and library) to anchor a future civic square
- Meet one-on-one with Councillors to probe their views regarding a central library
- Engage with Secondary Plan Update Project: Continue to engage with planning staff and consultants managing the MCSPU project
- Implement the 2021 BMFT/ILMP project to develop a process for evaluation public and private sector partnerships and business opportunities
- Support the City's Development Charges Background Study Update

Next Steps for the City:

Over the summer, Planning staff and the consultant will develop and refine a preferred development concept based on a review of the feedback and detailed comments to date. This phase will include further public consultation through a Public open house and the Your Voice Markham website.

Council, recognizing the complex and integrated nature of the MSCPU, as well as the need for a strong technical case to defend density levels, has requested additional Council workshops to seek data, answers and clarifications regarding unresolved issues, including assumptions regarding the capacity of the proposed transportation system.

A recommended Development Concept Report will be brought to DSC for approval by late 2021 / early 2022. Subject to Council approval, this Development Concept will be translated into a new Markham Centre Secondary Plan in 2022.

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Conclusion:

The behavior and demographics of the Markham Centre community and its interests in the Markham Centre will inform the design of future community and interests consultations regarding library services and a central library.

Continual monitoring of these factors will be vital as we plan future library services within Markham Centre. This will offer insights into how MPL can serve the unique needs and interest of this community.

There was lots of discussion on what a “new” Markham Centre/Markham Centre Library could look like. The MPL Board supports a Central Library inside downtown Markham that is accessible and supports marginalized communities.

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

Resolved that the Board receives the Board Education Report entitled “Markham Centre Planning”.

Carried.

11.0 **Incidental Information** (None)

12.0 **New Business:** 12.1 **MPL Reopening Plan**

Staff provided the Board with proposed timelines for reopening MPL’s doors to the public and staff in the coming months. The steps over the next several months, as Public Health and the City of Markham permit will need to go slowly and safely. In Stage II, which is slated to commence June 30, under provincial guidelines Public Libraries are allowed to open with capacity limits of 25%. MPL library branches that are located within Community Centres are subject to their guidelines. MPL will work within those parameters to reopen and get staff back to work. In addition to a planned timeframe staff will also need to anticipate any adverse actions that may occur. At this time no MPL employees have been infected with the Coronavirus. Provided there are no further lockdowns and vaccination rates continue to rise, there is hope that MPL will move toward full recovery as soon as it is expedient to do so.

There was a question if any of the reopening procedures were as a result of customer input/surveys. Staff advised that they had used Environics research in order to come up with an appropriate reopening plan for Markham residents.

Moved by Mr. Raymond Chan
Seconded by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky

Resolved that the Board receives the presentation entitled “MPL Reopening Plan”

Carried.

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- 13.0 **Board Evaluation:**
13.1 **Questionnaire Results: Performance of Individual Board Members**

Moved by Mr. Ben Hendriks
Seconded by Ms. Margaret McGrory

Resolved that report entitled “Questionnaire Results: Performance of Individual Board Members” be received.

Carried.

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

- 15.0 **Adjournment**

Mr. Siu asked the Commissioner if he would like to make any comments prior to adjourning the meeting. Mr. Jones stated that he appreciated the timeliness of the agenda and the participation and enthusiasm of Board Members.

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky and seconded by Edward Choi that the meeting be adjourned at 8:28 p.m.