

**MARKHAM PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD**

**Regular Meeting**

**Minutes of Regular Meeting held on Monday, May 31, 2021 7:10 p.m., Virtual Meeting**

Present from Board: Ms. Margaret McGrory, Vice-Chair /Acting Chair  
Mr. Raymond Chan  
Mr. Edward Choi  
Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton  
Mr. Ben Hendriks  
Councillor Keith Irish  
Councillor Andrew Keyes  
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. Deborah Walker, Director, Library Strategy & Planning  
Mrs. Hilary Murphy, Manager, Planning & Reporting  
Ms. Polly Chan, Financial Analyst  
Mr. Patrick Pan, Manager, Facilities & Workplace Safety  
Mrs. Angela Tse, Manager, Aaniin Branch  
Mrs. Susan Price, Board Secretary

Regrets: Mr. Alick Siu, Chair  
Ms. Iqra Awan

Guests: Ms. Naketa Wright, Manager, KPMG,  
Mr. Kevin Travers, Partner, KPMG

**1.0 Call to Order/Approval of Agenda**

Ms. Margaret McGrory, Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 7:10 p.m.

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

**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:**

The Vice-Chair asked that a 15 second moment of silence be observed in remembrance of the 215 Indigenous children whose remains were discovered in Kamloops B.C.

### **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.

Ms. McGrory asked Directors to introduce any staff members present.

The Vice-Chair reminded the Board that votes would need to be counted and to keep their hands raised until staff are able to do so.

1.4 **Board CEO-Linkage BCL-2e Policy; Performance Review:**

The Board was advised that the process for the Chief Executive Officer Performance Review for the year 2020 (ending February 28, 2021) was undertaken and completed.

The signed documents will be filed along with the CEO's response, per procedure.

Additionally, there will be a copy stored in a secured file on the server.

**PLEASE NOTE THAT AGENDA 5.1 WAS MOVED AHEAD IN ORDER TO ACCOMMODATE OUR GUESTS.**

5.1 **Financial Statements of the Markham Public Library Board:**

Ms. McGrory welcomed Ms. Naketa Wright, Manager, KPMG and Mr. Kevin Travers, Partner, KPMG who conducted the Markham Public Library Board annual audit.

Mr. Travers advised the Board that the audit for the Markham Public Library Board for 2020 is completed and that the audit was clean with no deficiencies or uncorrected differences. KPMG Auditors met with Senior Staff and the Board Chair May 19, 2021. Mr. Travers noted that the audit was conducted entirely remotely and that staff had provided them with a clean set of data. Mr. Travers also stated that the Pandemic had a significant impact on revenues and drew attention to Note 7, which has been included in all financial statements for 2020. It states that "During the year, the COVID-19 outbreak was declared a pandemic by the World Health Organization. This has resulted in the Canadian and Provincial governments enacting emergency measures to combat the spread of the virus. These measures, which include the implementation

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of travel bans, self-imposed quarantine periods and social distancing have resulted in a decline in revenues due to cancellation of events and lockdown measures.

The situation is dynamic and the ultimate duration and magnitude of the impact on the economy and the financial effect on operations is not known at this time. These emergency measure and economic impacts could include potential future decreases in revenues and expenses.”

Staff thanked the auditors for attending and the Vice-Chair extended an invitation to remain at the meeting if they chose to.

Moved by Deputy Mayor Hamilton  
Seconded by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky

**Resolved that the report entitled “Financial Statements of the Markham Public Library Board, December 31, 2020” be received; and,**

**That the Board approve the Financial Statements of the Markham Public Library Board December 31, 2020; and,**

**That the Board Chair be authorized to sign the approved 2020 Financial Statements on behalf of the Board; and,**

**That the Board authorize Staff to issue the final audited Financial Statements for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2020;**

**AND that Staff be authorized and directed to do all things necessary to give effect to this resolution.**

Carried.

### 2.0 **Approval of Minutes:**

2.1 Library Board Minutes April 26, 2021

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

**Resolved that the minutes of the April 26, 2021 Library Board Meeting be confirmed.**

Carried.

### 2.2 **Consent Agenda:**

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

**Resolved that the Consent Agenda comprising Agenda items 2.2 to 2.4.5 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:

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- 2.4.1 thestar.com: Markham announces plans to commemorate 50 years of excellence  
<https://www.thestar.com/localmarkham/news/council/2021/05/07/markham-announces-plans-to-commemorate-50-years-of-excellence.html>
- 2.4.2 MarkhamReview.com: Library celebrates 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary  
[Library celebrates 50th anniversary – Markham Review](#)
- 2.4.3 info51: Markham Public Library goes fine free for children, teens  
<https://info.51.ca/news/digest/2021-05/997014.html#arc997030>
- 2.4.4 yorkregion.com: Markham Public Library goes fine free for children, teens  
<https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/10393625-markham-public-library-goes-fine-free-for-children-teens/>
- 2.4.5 thestar.com: Markham Public Library goes fine free for children, teens  
<https://www.thestar.com/local-markham/news/2021/05/17/markham-public-library-goes-fine-free-for-children-teens.html>

Carried.

### 3.0 **CEO's Highlights:**

The Vice-Chair asked the CEO to comment on the Highlights, Mrs. Biss mentioned the following items:

- **New Commissioner of Community Services Commission:** Mr. Morgan Jones has worked for the City of Markham since 1991, most recently serving as Director of Operations. Commissioner Jones brings to his new role extensive experience in innovation and continuous improvement, a focus on exceptional customer service, strong fiscal management, team building expertise and operational excellence. MPL is looking forward to a very positive working relationship.
- **Provincial Announcement regarding reopening:** Public Libraries are included in Stage II of the plan. Given the timelines the earliest that can begin is July 5, 2021 assuming the vaccination milestones are achieved. We are currently working through recovery plans which will be provided to the Board at the June meeting.
- **Education-Learning Loss Trends:** In the May 1, 2021 issue of the Globe and Mail there was a comprehensive article laying out a growing body of evidence regarding the impact of school closures on the educational trajectory of children. Research exposes some of the damaging effects on children which can include decline in reading scores and impacts on mental health. For children of lockdown, literature can mean much more. It means solace, escape, a little joy, a little adventure and a little company in a world that for many currently lacks much of this.  
There was further discussion on where parents can find more information on the Library's reading programs for children.

Mrs. Biss also noted internal consultations on Markham Centre have been held and some goals and issues were raised. Next steps include the Consultant to process feedback and follow up with further discussion. There will be a report going to the Development Services Committee by the end of June and further discussions will take place over the summer and early fall.

Moved by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky  
Seconded by Councillor Andrew Keyes

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**Resolved that the report entitled “CEO’s Highlights May 2021” be received.**

Carried.

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)

5.2 **Executive Limitation: EL-2d Financial Condition**  
(Assigned to Mr. Raymond Chan)

Mr. Chan advised that he had reviewed the report and found it to be compliant and complete. He had contacted Board members by e-mail and received no questions or concerns.

There was a question on the Financial Statements (Agenda 5.1) concerning physical collections.

The report confirmed that the CEO and MPL’s practices relative to MPL’s Financial Condition comply with the requirements of EL-2d policy.

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

**Resolved that the Report entitled “Internal Monitoring Report-Executive Limitation EI-2d, Financial Condition” be received.**

Carried.

6.0 **Ends**

7.0 **Governance:**

7.1 **Update from OLBA-Ben Hendriks**

Mr. Hendriks had little news at this time and asked Ms. McGrory to provide an update on her initial OLS Assembly meeting, May 6, 2021.

Ms. McGrory was appointed by the MPL Board to the OLS Assembly for library systems of over 100K in population. In total, there are 9 assemblies.

Ms. McGrory attended the May 6, 2021 and was nominated to sit on the OLS Board. She will advise the MPL Board if there is anything of interest or concern to pass along.

8.0 **Ownership Linkage:**

8.1 **Input from Board Members**

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

9.0 **Board Advocacy:**  
9.1 **June 2021 Library Programs**

Staff advised Board members that they are always welcome to attend any virtual events. They should inform the Board Secretary if they would like to do so and Staff will be happy to introduce them to other attendees.

Mrs. Macklin also noted that June is seniors month.

Moved by Mrs. Pearl Mantell  
Seconded by Deputy Mayor Don Hamilton

**Resolved that the report “June 2021 Library Programs” be received.**

Carried.

10.0 **Education**  
10.1 **Diversity and Inclusion: City of Markham and MPL**

Staff explained Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) is directly relevant to public libraries mandate to provide equitable access and service to communities. The understanding of how libraries achieve this mandate has evolved over time in recognition that the neutrality on which service access was centered traditionally is inadequate in serving marginalized communities who face systemic barriers to participation.

MPL serves a diverse community. Approximately 70% of Markham residents identify as “visible Minorities”. Further, MPL’s clientele includes individuals from a diverse range of ages, genders, and accessibility needs. MPL recognizes the need for its organization to reflect the lived experience of its customers in order to be effective in community building efforts and remain a viable, relevant service.

In 2018, a staff team developed MPL’s first Inclusion Strategy in an attempt to articulate and prioritize opportunities to address DEI within MPL’s organizational Culture. The focus of the work was primarily internal, investigating how staff need to be supported in their understanding and commitment to providing equitable services. That said, areas for service improvements were also identified. The Inclusion Strategy identified some traditional areas of strength for MPL, including the system’s focus on wellness and mental health, engagement with cultural celebrations of relevance for the community and the diversity of the staff itself. Building from this, staff identified key areas to build service capacity: mental illness, accessibility and neurodiversity, ageing, racial and culture diversity, gender diversity, and economic marginalization and housing insecurity. The strategy included several outcomes such as encouraging staff engagement through sharing their lived experience, increasing staff satisfaction with diversity at MPL and improving customers’ sense of inclusion and equity at the library. This strategy was approved by Senior Management in 2019 and since that time staff have been working on implementing its recommendations.

In 2020 the City of Markham committed to a new **Diversity Action Plan**, the first revision in a decade. MPL is supporting this effort with a staff team contributing research and support for recommendations identified by the City’s citizen advisory committee on diversity.

The Vice-Chair asked about staff challenges and their acceptance of the strategies. There was some discussion on types of bias and specific training that staff had received.

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

**Resolved that the Board receives the Board Education Report entitled “Diversity and Inclusion: City of Markham and MPL”**

Carried.

### 10.2 **Municipal Priorities for 2021**

Staff gave a brief overview of **The Framework for Municipal Priorities –Building Markham’s Future Together (BMFT 2020-2023)** by breaking down the framework into **Goals, Objectives and Actions**. The **Goals** are outlined below with a brief list of the **actions** proposed to achieve these goals.

#### **BMFT Goal 1: Exceptional Services by Exceptional People**

- Community Engagement Strategy
- Planning for the 2022 Municipal Election
- Corporate Language Transition Policy
- Online Forms
- Perfect Mind (Class replacement)
- Enterprise Staff Scheduling Software
- Virtual Staff Training
- Digitization of Public-Facing Publications
- Digital Payment Initiative
- Advancing Digital Markham/“Frictionless City”
- Risk and Innovation
- Implementing the People Plan
- Investing in Staff Training
- Modernized Employee Wellness Program
- Collective Bargaining

#### **BMFT Goal 2: Engaged, Diverse, Thriving and Vibrant City**

- Neighborhood Partnership Strategy
- Expansion of the Community Hub Concept Across the City
- “Discover Markham” Project
- Special Events Strategy
- Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan Update
- Public Art
- Volunteer Program
- Culture Strategy
- Brand Strategy
- Creating and Environment to attract growth
- Economic Development Strategy
- York University Markham Campus
- Markham Centre-Civic Square
- Destination Markham Strategy

#### **BMFT Goal 3: Safe, Sustainable and Complete Community**

- Yonge Subway and other Higher-Order Transit-Advocacy
- Building Complete Communities
- Secondary Plans
- Implementation of the 2019 ILMP
- Parking Strategy
- Official Plan Review
- Business Continuity Planning

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- Reducing Energy Consumption-Net Zero Plan
- Rouge national Urban Park

### **BMFT Goal 4: Stewardship of Money and Resources**

- Funding Strategy and E3
- Sponsorship Strategy
- Evaluation of partnerships to Support Service Delivery
- Continuous Improvement
- BFMT Public reporting
- Auditor General Reports

There was some discussion and a comment that it is clear that the Library is working in alignment with the City.

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

**Resolved that the Board receives the Board Education Report entitled “Municipal Priorities for 2021”**

Carried.

### 11.0 **Incidental Information (none)**

### 12.0 **New Business (none)**

### 13.0 **Board Evaluation:**

#### 13.1 **Questionnaire: Performance of Individual Board Members**

The Vice-Chair asked Board Members to complete the questionnaire and e-mail to the Board Secretary.

### 14.0 **In Camera Agenda (none)**

### 15.0 **Adjournment:**

Moved by Mr. Edward Choi and seconded by Mrs. Lillian Tolensky that the meeting be adjourned at 8:05 p.m.