



To support and represent trustees in advancing public libraries

TO: The BCLTA Board of Directors
FROM: Babs Kelly, Executive Director
DATE: March 28, 2020
SUBJECT: Executive Director Report: February 26 to March 28, 2020

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide the BCLTA directors with a report of contracted staff work so that the directors can provide oversight, advisement, and course correction.

The document includes:

- Summary of work highlights (executive director and administrative assistant / bookkeeper)
- Dashboard of key actions and strategic alignment, risks and mitigation, and board direction required.

For board discussion:

- What did you read in my report that excited you about where we are as an organization? I'd like to hear what's important to you.
- What did you read that caused you concern or left you with further questions? I'd like the opportunity to provide any background or explanations or to elaborate for clarification.

Summary of Staff Work

Please note that current and upcoming ED work is aligned with the BCLTA Strategic Framework. Direct services to the members (inquiries, website resources, the *Bulletin*), managing new initiatives and provincial funding for the development of BCLTA governance resources, Partners advocacy work, and emerging initiatives with partners, account for all available ED hours until July 2020. Any further work and Board direction will require priority adjustments.

2020 Forum, BC Libraries Conference and BCLTA Social

- The Forum and the full day of sessions at the BC Libraries Conference were cancelled.
- Staff hours were re-allocated towards cancellation communications, thank you notes to scheduled speakers and Elders, refunding fees, website updates, and follow-up management with the BC Library Association.

2020 AGM

- The 2020 AGM has been postponed.
- At this time, it is required by BC Registry that an AGM is held in this calendar year.
- Directors have the agenda and their roles and responsibilities from February board package – this will not hugely change for the re-scheduled AGM.
- The website has been updated to note the postponement and once a new date has been decided, will be updated and a notification of the AGM date will be sent to members. The new date will re-open board nominations and resolution submissions.
- The ED recommends that a remote access AGM be scheduled for a date no later than October 24, 2020. We are required by legislation to offer remote access to all our AGMs. By holding this AGM as remote only, it would provide equitable access to the AGM without appearing to provide greater access or influence at the AGM to any one region.

2020 Board Spring Review and Orientation

- This has been postponed to possibly coincide with the new AGM date, or to take place after (to include new board members) or to take place with the hiring of a new ED. Much depends on when the COVID-19 measures end and the schedules of the current board.

- See March Board Report for Review and Orientation plan.
- This is an important meeting for building on the results from the February engagement survey (see March Board package) and for orienting any new board members and a new ED. The current board has a strong level of engagement and oversight rigour that would be good to make “stick” through an in-person meeting as was proposed for April .

2020 BCLTA Re-organization

- The ED position was advertised on our website, through social media and Charity Village. The ED followed up with interested candidates and forwarded applications to the Board Executive.

BCLTA Governance Workshop: Pilot Project

- All workshops are suspended with plans to reschedule.
- The ED applied for funding from the Ministry of Education. Through follow-up discussions with Mari Martin, the Director of the Libraries Branch, enthusiasm was generated and the project received a one-time grant of \$10,000. (Funding letter attached)

BCLTA Governance Workshop: Customized

- A customized workshop was delivered for the Surrey Libraries Board on February 29th and received the following comments:
 - Fantastic workshop and presentation style!
 - The content changed how I think about board work and I would most definitely recommend BCLTA workshops.
 - I love your facilitating style!
 - Fantastic delivery and material.
 - Very inspiring session!
 - Refreshing workshop that left me inspired.
 - Amazing workshop format.
 - This is what we needed. Our other workshops and facilitators didn’t meet the mark. They were from the old school. It was about them, this was about us.
- One was planned for the Vancouver Public Library Board on March 28th and with the Nelson Board on April 9th. with another in the planning with Nelson Public Library. These have been postponed.
- These workshops are developed and delivered within Bab’s contract hours the costs of travel and accommodation are easily covered by the workshop fees.

- BCLTA has been requested to provide a governance workshop for senior staff (not library directors or trustees). This was scheduled for April 20th at the Burnaby Public Library and has been postponed.

BCLTA Governance Leadership: Chairing and Leading

- The first delivery of this workshop took place on March 7th at North Van City Library with 22 participants (6 library directors and 16 trustees) and received the following comments:
 - Reassuring and confidence building – a great opportunity, thank you!
 - BCLTA has changed their game and is making a difference with quality services such as this workshop
 - Very effective and highly recommend for others
 - Excellent facilitation and content
 - I actually learned stuff – thank you for being you!
 - Concrete learning that demystified the role of the chair, very well facilitated
 - Great workshop and time well spent
 - Content exceeded expectations and very useful for understanding the whole process, having examples of practice, will help for framing and planning board meetings and expectations
 - Helpful to hear the questions of trustees in the room and to think about what that means for what our board needs
- We had to close registration for the workshop and turn-away 8 who were interested.
- This is vastly different from our past 3 years working with Vantage Point where we were cancelling poorly registered (2 or less) workshops.
- This workshop is developed and delivered within Bab's contract hours the costs of travel and accommodation are easily covered by the workshop fees.
- Chairing and Leading Workshops were also scheduled with the North Central Library Federation in Prince George on April 25th and with the North East Library Federation in Tumbler Ridge on May 2nd. These have been postponed to the fall.

Advocacy and Outreach

- Continued discussions with Mari Martin regarding funding for workshops, a letter from the Minister to boards/trustees (January 2020 BCLTA Board Meeting) and the possibility of the Ministry Counting Opinions Survey could include sharing

results of trustee names with BCLTA (See 2019 AGM Resolution Regarding the Libraries Branch Annual Survey at <https://www.bclta.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/2019-Resolution-Regarding-Counting-Opinions-and-Trustees.pdf>)

- The next ED meeting with Mari Martin is March 31, 2020
- This will be to discuss funding for BCLTA to support the Ministry's strategic plan for public libraries (there is language regarding support for boards).
- Continued meetings with the Public Library Advisory Group (Ministry stakeholder and advisory group) regarding the Ministry's strategic plan for public libraries. The BCLTA board feedback on the plan was shared at the March 5th PLAG meeting. We are now waiting to see the final plan.

Ongoing 2020 Planning & Staff Execution

- Jan Thomas has completed the financial year end review.
 - With direction from the Board Executive the year end financials will not be reviewed by an accounting firm. Jan has inquired of the costs for a financial review from 6 accounting firms and all have come back with quotes of over \$3,500 and have cautioned that the work could go as high as \$4,000 to \$6,000 for the first time that they review our books.
 - Marianna Scott, from Quantum (who have done our past reviews), sent Jan a referral and she wrote the following: 'One thing I would mention – even the smallest review is going to cost the organization at least \$4,000. That's 5% of your budget. With no funder requiring a review, it may be a good time to rethink the policy with the board if that's possible'.
 - As board policy is not aligned with the Bylaws or with current operations, staff took direction from the Board Executive to not pursue a financial review for 2019/2020 budget.
 - The ED believes that BCLTA can feel secure with the board's oversight and staff practices.
 - Current oversight needs include director signers for our VanCity account.
- 2020/21 budget management is being re-calibrated to accommodate Ministry funding and potential funding, the potential fewer deliveries of workshops, and the cancellation of the Forum.
- Website and *Bulletin* development
 - The website and *Bulletin* are ongoing work to bring resources, connections, and news (value) to the membership.
 - *Bulletin* opens within the first 5 days of sending, which have been on a steady increase, experience a small decrease of 2% in March (42.6 percent open), which may be expected at this time. Positive feedback on the content and style of the *Bulletin* suggests that we should continue with this format and approach and to promote contributions and use. Comments from the March *Bulletin* included:

- Very useful board tips as always!
 - You hit just the right tone for this difficult time. As a communication specialist I have to say this is not easy to do, and yet you did it outstandingly well.
 - Please keep doing what you are doing with the Bulletin. As a board chair I'm trying to get my entire board to subscribe and I make it part of all our board meetings.
 - As a large urban library we have funds for a variety of resources, but the Bulletin is the friendliest and always has something of interest and use.
- Use of website resources, such as the Discussion Starters, Trustee Quick Guide, and the Trustee Orientation Checklist is slowly increasing. Several boards have emails to say that this year's orientation was better with use of the checklist and the quick guide.
- The BCLTA Message for Governance and COVID-19 (attached), that was sent through ABCPLD on March 16th, resulted in 19 messages from board chairs and library directors mentioning the letter and how useful and reassuring it was in regards to their process for library closures and for the board's role in continuing to govern.
- Membership support
 - In addition to the monthly *Bulletin* and website and resource development, approximately 26 hours were spent in direct support of boards (emails and phone calls).
- Ongoing BCLTA board support and administrative assistant/bookkeeper work.
 - ED recruitment
 - Membership invoices have been sent.
 - Signing Authority. We need additional directors and J. Thomas is working with Vancity to find a doable process for easily adding directors for signing authority in 2020
 - J. Thomas is also working on reconciling financial records, and the year-end work and the financial review with Quantum Accounting Services
- 2020 BCLTA Policy Review
 - Work to be scheduled for the summer of 2020 for a draft policy manual to be ready for the board's fall retreat

BCLTA Strategic Framework to 2025:
ED Work Report to January 28, 2020

Strategic Focus 1: Supporting Trustee and Board Development			
Goal 1	Actions	Risks and Mitigation	Board Direction Required
Expand reach of trustee orientation and board development resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> March Launch of BCLTA Governance Meet-up and Governance Discussions. Began 2020 with Launch of BCLTA Governance Workshop pilot, customized workshops and BCLTA Governance Leadership: Chairing and Leading 	On time, on budget, and community interest is on the rise.	None, at this time.
	<i>Public Library Governance: A quick guide for library trustees (new for 2020) and the Trustee Orientation Check-list were promoted in the January and February Bulletin, increasing their use and appreciation of BCLTA.</i>		None, at this time.
Goal 2	Actions	Risks and Mitigation	Board Direction Required
Strengthen partnerships and collaborations for shared trustee and staff professional development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> While the BC Libraries Conference was cancelled the Friday of governance focused sessions with ABCPLD and that BCLA extended their venue booking to include the 	ED continues to meet with and make plans for shared initiatives such as co-creating 1 or 2 online workshops with ABCPLD.	None, at this time.

	<p>BCLTA Forum speaks to the strength of these partnerships.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As well, the Ministry of Education provided \$3,000 for the Forum keynote speaker. 		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing discussions with Mari Martin regarding funding for the 2020 Governance Workshops - \$10,009 has been received for the pilot project and discussion continue regarding further funding. Collaborated with Mari Martin (Libraries Branch) on the Public Library Governance: A quick guide for library trustees (December and January) and she is interested in future collaborations. Ongoing communications with library federation managers for scheduling workshops and an open invitation for other shared initiatives – scheduling is on hold but will continue ASAP. Information sharing meetings with Alberta and Sask. trustee associations and with trustee committee of the Manitoba Library Association. 	<p>Board awareness of staff resources. Currently all of the work is within the association's capacity, but there is very little room for additional work or additional emerging opportunities.</p>	<p>None, at this time.</p>
	<p>Continued discussions with M. Martin regarding Minister letter for boards/trustees (January 2020 BCLTA Board meeting) and 2019 AGM resolutions regarding Libraries Branch Counting Opinions Survey and BCLTA.</p>	<p>ED is meeting often with M. Martin to maintain momentum and shared enthusiasm for Ministry/BCLTA shared goals. Next meeting is scheduled for March 31st.</p>	<p>None, at this time.</p>

	Ongoing communications and meetings with BCSTA staff, BCLTA ED, ABCPLD ED, Saskatchewan and Alberta library trustee association EDs, and federation managers.		None, at this time.
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Strategic Focus 2: Representing Trustees and Boards			
Goal 1	Actions	Risks and Mitigation	Board Direction Required
Strong and effective BC Public Library Partners.	<p>The Partners released a shared message regarding the 2020 Budget announcement. See https://www.bclta.ca/20-million-in-2020-campaign/</p> <p>Partner work continues on post-budget strategizing and drafting of shared message to members .</p>	<p>Best use of staff time / President provides oversight and support.</p> <p>Significant BCLTA staff time has been invested in the Partners work. Stepping back from coordinating meetings and record keeping and the UBCM will free up time for other BCLTA work.</p> <p>The time spent on developing and coordinating the Partners has hugely benefitted BCLTA (board and members) in amplifying trustee voices to the ministry and library community; in increasing BCLTA capacity and impact; and in strengthening BCLTA's reputation with the other associations and library leaders.</p>	Ongoing oversight and advisement re/ use of staff time to ensure the building of a strong and effective Partners and that work benefits membership.

Goal 2	Actions	Risks and Mitigation	Board Direction Required
<p>Successful advocacy strategy</p>	<p>The Partners met with Minister Fleming on March 25th. The meeting was brief and the Minister expressed his appreciation for how quickly and responsibly public libraries responded to COVID19 and government direction and that public libraries are offering such a variety of virtual services.</p> <p>BCLTA speaking points at the meeting attached to this report.</p> <p>The Partners will be meeting with the Minister on June 21st.</p>		<p>Ongoing oversight and direction regarding BCLTA and advocacy.</p>
	<p>\$20 Million in 2020 campaign.</p> <p>While we did not receive the requested funding, the campaign is of significant success in that the BC public library community has a cohesive & consistent message successfully used across the province and across library types; the momentum has continued; it was adaptable to our UBCM trade show presence; and it has been noticed by the Ministry of Education and Minister C. James.</p> <p>The Library Partners' video (see video on \$20M in 2020 page) directly informed the Ministry of Education's strategic plan for public libraries.</p>		

	Next Partners' step is preparation for the 2021 provincial budget consultations which are scheduled for summer of 2020.		
Goal 3	Actions	Risks and Mitigation	Board Direction Required
Reliable and effective provincial support for the advancement of public libraries across the province	<p>Continued meetings with the Public Library Advisory Group (Ministry stakeholder and advisory group) regarding the Ministry's strategic plan for public libraries.</p> <p>The BCLTA board feedback on the plan was shared at the March 5th PLAG meeting. We are waiting to see the final document.</p> <p>The PLAG ToR was to come to board for advisement in the spring of 2019. Changes in Ministry structure have put this and the Libraries Branch strategic plan update behind schedule.</p>	<p>Balancing a working partnership & funding with Ministry staff & need to represent membership needs to elected officials and other areas of government.</p> <p>ADM McCrea's leave (she returned to work in late March) and COVID-19 has put the work on a shared commitment statement behind schedule.</p>	<p>Future Board direction regarding the Public Libraries Advisory Group – PLAG ToR (Ministry plans to have finalized in early 2020)</p> <p>TBD</p>

Strategic Focus 3: Connecting with Trustees and Boards

Goal 1	Actions	Risks and Mitigation	Board Direction Required
<p>Meet trustees and boards where they live and work.</p>	<p>New initiatives – Governance Meet-ups (using Zoom, first on April 18th) and Governance Discussions for boards.</p> <p>Improved access to BCLTA Governance Workshops (3 different workshops for 2020)</p> <p>Responding to ongoing requests for information and support.</p> <p>The ED spends approximately 30 hours each month in direct support (emails and phone calls) with trustees and boards.</p> <p>2019 Libraries Branch funding for TOP was directed at B.Kelly having greater involvement with the ongoing development and delivery of TOP. This is being achieved in 2020 as B.Kelly is delivering some of the pilot project workshops, and this year all of the customized and Chairing and Leading workshops as well as using funding for developing more governance resources.</p> <p>The 2019 Ministry Funding Report (submitted January 15th) can be found in the board section of the website.</p>	<p>COVID-19 is putting BCLTA behind in delivering workshops.</p> <p>Babs will be discussing this with M. Martin in regards to how this impacts outcomes and funding.</p> <p>In February ABCPLD incoming Chair commended BCLTA for the “specificity and price point” of the three different workshops.</p>	<p>Ongoing oversight and advisement re/ use of staff time to ensure benefitting membership.</p>
Goal 2	Actions	Risks and Mitigation	Board Direction Required

<p>Strengthen communication with trustees and the BC public library community</p>	<p>Monthly <i>Bulletin</i>, responsive staff, outreach for workshops, and events.</p> <p>There have been increased <i>Bulletin</i> subscription, <i>Bulletin</i> openings and click-through, and website use as well as an increase in feedback from trustees regarding the <i>Bulletin</i>, the website and the workshops.</p>	<p>Staff capacity / less time spent on BCLTA board reports and development.</p>	<p>The Directors may want to start thinking about BCLTA board development and bring forward ideas to the Chair.</p> <p>While staff focus on membership needs are there director roles for focusing on BCLTA internal board development and communications, such as a BCLTA board development/governance committee?</p>
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March 6th 2020

Mike Gagel President, British Columbia Library Trustee Association **Email c/o: execdir@bclta.ca**

Dear Mike:

VIA EMAIL

The Ministry of Education is pleased to inform you that the British Columbia Library Trustees Association (BCLTA) will receive a one-time grant of \$10,000 for the further development and professional learning of B.C.'s Library Trustees.

This **one-time grant** is for the following purposes: • BCLTA Governance Workshops Pilot Project

The Ministry will deposit funds electronically into the account at the financial institution that your association has designated. A notice will be mailed to you once payment has been made.

The Libraries Branch looks forward to working with you. As detailed in the November 19, 2019 Funding Proposal, this funding is to support the accessibility of workshops, increase number of participants registration and an outcomes assessment tool to measure the impact of these

workshops.

In accordance with conditions placed on all government grants, the BCLTA must submit a final report by February 1, 2021 outlining how this funding was used for the BCLTA Governance Workshops Pilot Project. Continued provincial funding for your organization is contingent on the completion of this report. If timing of this report needs to be reconsidered, please contact the Libraries Branch before the deadline.

This report must also:

- Clearly demonstrates value to the Province and BCLTA members as a result of government funding;
- Identifies how deliverables were met;
- Illustrates performance/evaluation metrics in deliverables
- Highlights outcomes achieved;
- Demonstrates where possible increase in understanding of governance roles and **Ministry of Education Libraries Branch** Mailing Address:
Telephone: PO Box 9831 Stn Prov Govt 1-800-663-7051

Victoria BC V8W 9H1

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responsibilities.

The B.C. Government is committed to open public access to information and is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy*

Act. The Province may release any or all information submitted for these reports to the public.

Please be aware that the Ministry will reclaim any portion of the grants should the association not use the funds received for the purposes outlined in this letter.

We look forward to working with you to support library trustees, library staff and effective board governance.

Sincerely,

Mari Martin Director

pc: Babs Kelly, Executive Director, execdir@bclta.ca

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mari Martin', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

BCLTA Message: Governance and COVID-19

- March 16, 2020
- Babs Kelly, Executive Director, BCLTA

Dear all,

I am, as always, impressed with the leadership team at ABCPLD and greatly appreciate their gathering of expertise and information to support library directors with their management responsibilities during this time of COVID-19 concern.

We know, given how quickly direction and advisement is evolving from different levels of government and from health authorities, that it is important that library directors, as management, can and should make decisions for keeping staff and communities calm and healthy, and the number of COVID-19 cases low on a day-to-day operational level.

Over the past few days I have received many questions regarding the role of boards during this time.

Specifically, I have been asked if a board motion is required for closing the public library. This all depends.

- Hopefully the board will have already given authority to the library director to respond in urgent and emerging situations such as a pandemic. That is a standing authority that then allows the library director to make decisions in crisis or emerging crisis situations, such as fire, earthquakes, and pandemics. Those decisions are then reviewed and discussed at a future board meeting. Therefore, no new board motion is required.
- If the above doesn't exist, it is still the responsibility of the library director to make operational management decisions. The library director will have considered the health and safety of staff, volunteers, and the community and they will have considered the operating environment which includes the health authority, government, and decisions or directions that are being made locally, such as the cancelling of public programs or the closure of public spaces.

- If it is a precautionary closure, as in it is not being mandated by the health authority or requested by local government, then the board chair and the library director **may** decide to call an emergency board meeting (remote access) to get board direction and support.

At that time the board may choose to record a motion that supports the library director with their operational management authority.

While the nature of how governance teams (boards, chairs, and library directors) varies across the province, in general the role of the board chair and board includes the following:

1. Support the operational and management role of the library director. Understand that the library director is focused on the concerns and well-being of staff, volunteers, and the community. Be clear that the library director has the support of the board for managing the situation.
2. Be a governance partner. The board chair should make themselves available to the library director for updates and as someone to talk to. The job of the board, through the board chair, is to support one person. The job of the library director is to support and manage many. The library director needs a trusted and empathetic governance partner.
3. Communicate. The board chair should communicate to the board that they are in touch with the library director and that updates will be provided as necessary.
4. Plan for your next board meeting. What will be your fiduciary, strategic, and generative discussions regarding COVID-19 and your public library?
 - Did your emergency or crisis board policies meet the needs of the library during this time?
 - Do your policies include what to do when the municipality or district cancels programs or closes public facilities for health precautions?

- Are there clear guidelines that support the library director to manage an emerging and quickly changing situation?
- Did you as a board clearly understand the library's responsibilities to staff?

5. Make a big deal out of acknowledging the leadership of the library director and the work of staff during what is a stressful time for many.

Huge thanks to ABCPLD for sharing this message from BCLTA. We ask that library directors share this with their boards and that board chairs let BCLTA know what we might do to best support the work of your governance team.

Babs Kelly

BCLTA Speaking Points
March 28th 2020 meeting with Minister Fleming

Thank you Scott for so very well, and in such short time, covering the ongoing operations of public libraries.

Briefly, in regards to governance. At BCLTA we are continuing to support our members as always with understanding their role - their governance role doesn't change with COVID19, just the context in which they are governing.

While we had to cancel our BCLTA Forum, AGM, and the many governance workshops that were scheduled across BC, we have quickly moved up some virtual initiatives that we were planning for the fall - namely Trustee Governance Meet-ups and virtual board workshops. We also continue to offer our ongoing board and trustee governance support services, monthly *Bulletin*, and our growing catalogue of resources available through our website.

I'm in awe of the commitment that trustees, the vast majority of who are volunteers, the rest being local elected officials, have shown in supporting their libraries during this difficult time.

As we have these discussions, we need to keep in mind that there are four different kinds of libraries, and 3 different types of library boards that serve and reflect communities that vary in size, socio-economic circumstances, and geopolitical context. As well the staffing levels and organizational capacity, collective agreements (or not), funding relationships and level of integration with municipal and regional district governments, and community and local government expectations all inform public library governance.

There is no one-size fits all response for public libraries and we will, working with our partners and the Ministry, continue to support our members in meeting the highest duty of care in their work.