

BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

AGENDA

Regular Meeting

DATE: 2019 November 21 (Thursday)

PLACE: 3rd Floor Board Room
Bob Prittie Metrotown Branch
6100 Willingdon Avenue

TIME: 19:00h (7:00pm)

Our dream is:

A welcoming community where all people can explore, learn and connect.

To realize our dream:

We empower the community to engage with and share stories, ideas and information.

We would like to recognize we are on the ancestral and unceded homelands of the Sḵwx̱wú7mesh and traditional hə́ŋqəmiḥəm speaking people, and to extend appreciation for the opportunity to hold a meeting on this shared territory.

PAGE NO.

1. Delegation – Sharon Freeman

2. **Motion** to receive agenda

3. Minutes

Motion to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting held 2019 October 17 as circulated

ENCLOSED

4. Reports

i) Board Chair (verbal)

ii) Council Liaison (verbal)

iii) InterLINK Representative (verbal)

5. Items Requiring a Decision

i) Christmas Holiday Opening Hours 2020

1-2

Purpose: To seek the Library Board's direction on whether or not to close all branches on Monday, December 28, 2020.

6. Items for Information

i) Intellectual Freedom and Room Bookings

3-4

Purpose: To provide the Library Board with information on recent debates surrounding intellectual freedom and room bookings in other library systems.

7. Report of the Chief Librarian

i) Newspaper Clippings

SENT VIA DIGITAL
AGENDA PACKAGE

Purpose: To provide the Library Board with information regarding media articles published in the past month that referenced the library.

8. Other Business

9. Next Library Board Meeting – 2019 December 12 at 7:00pm in the 3rd floor Board Room at the Bob Prittie Metrotown Branch, 6100 Willingdon Avenue.

10. Adjournment

Motion that the regular meeting adjourn and that the Board resolve itself into an in camera meeting from which the public is excluded to consider financial and labour matters.



Burnaby Public Library

TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

SUBJECT: CHRISTMAS HOLIDAY OPENING HOURS 2020

DATE: 2019 NOVEMBER 21

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Library Board decide whether to close all library branches on Monday, December 28, 2020.

REPORT

Background

Closing library branches is a decision of the Library Board.

At the October 2019 Board meeting, the Chief Librarian identified potential issues and opportunities with holiday closures around Christmas 2020. Trustees asked the Chief Librarian to prepare a report for discussion.

Burnaby Public Library closes on all statutory holidays and on the Sunday adjacent to a statutory holiday. Library staff do not work when the library is closed, with the exception of part-time and auxiliary Building Service Workers, who undertake deep cleaning and other tasks that are not possible when the library is open. In addition, the Burnaby Public Library Board's practice is to close library branches at 1pm on December 24.

In 2020, Christmas holiday hours would fall as follows:

- Thursday, December 24 [Close at 1pm]
- Friday, December 25 [Library closed for statutory holiday]
- Saturday, December 26 [Library closed for statutory holiday]
- Sunday, December 27 [Library closed - Sunday adjacent to statutory holiday]
- Monday, December 28 [regular working day]

In 2015, the last year that Christmas Day fell on a Friday, library branches remained open on Monday, December 28, but Library Administration and Technical Services were closed. In 2015, City Hall was closed on Monday, December 28.

City of Burnaby management have decided to close City Hall on Monday, December 28, 2020. BPL management are seeking Board guidance on whether to close libraries that day.

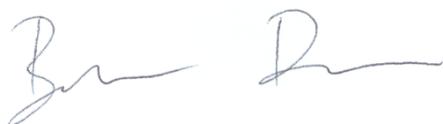
Discussion

- Closing library branches on Monday, December 28 would allow library staff to have an additional consecutive day free from work.
- Operationally, closing on this day would make scheduling for vacation and sick coverage easier at a time when many staff choose to take vacation.
- Closing on this day would also align library branches with Burnaby City Hall practice.
- Other city facilities, such as Recreation Centres, typically remain open on most statutory holidays with reduced hours, and close on Christmas Day.
- Closing branches for an extended stretch of time (from 1pm on Thursday, December 24 to 9am or 10am on Tuesday, December 29) will inconvenience patrons, many of whom do not celebrate Christmas.

Historical activity

The days following the Christmas break are typically a busy period for BPL branches, with the first day following the Christmas break the busiest. The table below shows checkouts (excluding renewals) and patrons registered on weekdays following the Christmas break. Foot traffic data is not available at this level of detail.

Year	Day	Checkouts	Patrons registered
2015	Monday 28	11,616	56
	Tuesday 29	8,901	41
	Wednesday 30	8,582	56
2016	Wednesday 28	10,830	41
	Thursday 29	8,233	36
	Friday 30	8,653	50
2017	Wednesday 27	9,014	55
	Thursday 28	6,844	56
	Friday 29	7,762	72
2018	Thursday 27	8,852	58
	Friday 28	6,619	61



Beth Davies
CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY



TO: CHAIR AND TRUSTEES
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

FROM: CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

SUBJECT: INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM AND ROOM BOOKINGS

DATE: 2019 NOVEMBER 21

RECOMMENDATION:

THAT the Library Board receive this report for information.

REPORT

In 2019, there has been much discussion about libraries and intellectual freedom. In particular, this discussion has centred around the intersection between hate speech and intellectual freedom in the context of meeting room rentals by trans exclusionary groups at Vancouver Public Library and Toronto Public Library.

Issues raised include equity and diversity, creating a welcoming space for marginalized groups, limits to freedom of expression, whether libraries can or should be neutral spaces, power structures within libraries and in the library community, and how institutions like libraries can or should maintain or challenge societal norms and dominant privileges.

This report includes background reading from various perspectives for trustees' information, together with BPL context.

Background reading

There are many articles and social media threads debating the issue. The following either pull together information from a variety of sources or have been widely quoted and debated.

- BC Library Trustees Association [Discussion Starters: Intellectual Freedom](#) includes an overview of intellectual freedom, ideas for discussion topics, and questions that trustees may want to consider.

- Alvin Schrader, [Can Public Libraries Maintain Their Commitment to Intellectual Freedom in the Face of Outrage Over Unpopular Speakers](#) is an article by one of the most respected intellectual freedom voices in Canada. An interesting counterpoint is an article by Sam Popowich, [The Discourse of Room Rentals](#). For a broader look at the issue of free speech and platforms, see Nesrine Malik's article in *The Guardian*, [The Myth of the Free Speech Crisis](#).
- The Canadian Federation of Library Associations' [letter of support to the Toronto Public Library Board](#), the BC Library Association Board's [concern over CFLA's position](#), and the [open letter to the CFLA Board](#) from three local library leaders calling on the CFLA board to engage with the library community to update the CFLA intellectual freedom policy
- The [public petition](#) directed at TPL calling for the cancellation of this event, which has almost 10,000 signatures, and the [letter](#) by the Toronto Public Library Workers Union asking TPL to reconsider its decision.

BPL Context

- Burnaby Public Library's values include Intellectual Freedom: We encourage the free exchange of information and ideas in a democratic society. BPL endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' statement on intellectual freedom and includes the statement in the [Board Policy Manual](#) (section 1.1.3, page 7).
- The Chief Librarian was a signatory to letters from the Canadian Urban Libraries Council to the [Vancouver](#) and [Toronto](#) Library Boards in support of those libraries' decisions to rent space to trans exclusionary groups.
- In 2019, BPL created a Transgender Inclusion Working Group. Made up of staff from across the organization, the group's mandate is to recommend actions to make BPL a more inclusive workplace and public space for transgender staff and patrons.
- BPL's program rooms are primarily intended for library purposes. BPL does not rent program and meeting rooms for profit, but may permit their use by not-for-profit community groups. BPL's room booking policy is outlined in the [Board Policy Manual](#) (section 3.8, page 35).

Trustees are encouraged to bring questions, concerns and comments to the meeting, or to the Chief Librarian at any time.



Beth Davies
CHIEF LIBRARIAN
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY