

**BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD**

**AGENDA**

Regular Meeting

DATE: 2020 May 21 (Thursday)

PLACE: via Zoom (access will be emailed)

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 hən̓q̓əmi̓ñəm̓ and Skwxwú7mesh speaking peoples, and to extend appreciation for the opportunity to hold a meeting on this shared territory.

**PAGE NO.**

1. **Motion** to receive agenda

2. **Minutes**

i) **Motion** to adopt the minutes of the regular meeting held 2020 April 16 as circulated

**ENCLOSED**

3. **Reports**

i) **Board Chair** (verbal)

ii) **Council Liaison** (verbal)

iii) **InterLINK Representative** (verbal)

4. **Items for Information**

i) **BPL Fine Free Initiative**

**1-2**

Purpose: To provide the Library Board with information on the BPL Fine Free initiative, including next steps.

5. **Report of the Chief Librarian**

i) **COVID-19 and Library Operations**

**3-7**

Purpose: To update the Library Board with Library operations during COVID-19

6. Other Business

7. Next Library Board Meeting – 2020 June 18 at 7:00pm via Zoom.

8. Adjournment

**Motion** that the regular meeting adjourn.



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**TO:** CHAIR AND TRUSTEES  
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

**FROM:** BRANCH MANAGER, CAMERON BRANCH  
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

**DATE:** 2020 MAY 21

**SUBJECT:** BPL FINE FREE INITIATIVE

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**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Board receive this report for information.

## REPORT

In July 2019, the BPL Library Board approved the removal of overdue fines. The associated budget request was brought to the May 11 Council meeting and was approved as part of the 2020-2024 Annual Financial Plan.

This report summarizes the rationale behind the Fine Free Initiative, next steps for implementation, evaluation, and the communication plan for roll out during the time of Covid-19.

### Background

BPL has long recognized that late fines act as a financial and psychological barrier to Library access for many of our community members, disproportionately impacting vulnerable populations and youth. While staff have worked to support patrons on a case by case basis, we recognize that there are still a great deal of patrons who have been negatively impacted by the fear of incurring late fines.

In eliminating late fines, BPL aims to position the Library as a welcoming rather than punitive institution. As the work of our Community Librarians and the success of the Access Card initiative have demonstrated, removing fines can increase Library access for those who need us the most and can lead users to return to the Library after years of being away.

At the July 2019 Board meeting, the BPL Board discussed the impact of fines on the BPL community and the research that has been shared by academics and other libraries on the impact of removing overdue fines. The Board approved the recommendation to submit a budget request for \$170,000 for the removal of overdue fines, and pending approval by Council, to move forward with a Fine Free model at BPL.

Over the past few months, Christie Menzo has led a working group that has put together a plan for how the Fine Free model will operate in the BPL system. The plan has been approved by Senior Staff and work is being done to implement changes internally before releasing news of the change to the public.

### *Key Points of the Fine Free Roll Out*

- All pre-existing late fees on patron accounts (approximately 64,829 accounts) have been waived.
- When the Library re-opens to the public post-pandemic, we will discontinue charging overdue penalties for late returns.
- We will implement auto-renewal simultaneously with Fine Free

- While items will not accrue late fines, we do want our items back! Items that are overdue 28 days or longer will be considered “lost” and patron Library accounts will be temporarily suspended until an item is returned or paid for.

## **Next Steps**

Although library branches are closed, we have already begun a soft roll out of the fine free mandate, as patrons are not accumulating late fees during library closure.

BPL plans to officially announce our move to a Fine Free platform alongside the resumption of limited in-person service.

BPL staff will also work to update internal documents and website information, and ensure that staff have adequate information and training on the changes to borrowing and patron messaging.

## **Evaluation**

In order to evaluate the impact and effectiveness of a Fine Free model at BPL, we will be pursuing a range of internal and external evaluative measures. Internal evaluation metrics will help us to assess the impact of Fine Free on collection availability, hold lists, check out duration, and overdue rates. External evaluation metrics will allow us to assess the impact of the model on our community.

### *Internal Impact Report.*

- Checkout duration
- Collection availability
- Collection availability by audience
- Number of active requests and hold resolutions
- Hold fulfillment average wait times
- Overdue Rates

### *External Impact Reports*

- Patron feedback surveys (6 months after launch/1 year after launch)
- Staff feedback survey (6 months after launch)

After the launch of Fine Free at BPL, we also plan to do ongoing tracking of patron comments and feedback in order to continually monitor and respond to patron questions and needs.

## **Communication**

While we had initially planned to communicate news of the Fine Free roll out in conjunction with the launch of the BC Summer Reading Club on June 12, Covid-19 has required us to pivot our plans.

We now plan to announce the news alongside messaging around a limited library re-opening, whenever this may be. We believe that this timing will emphasize the Library commitment to being a welcoming and accessible place for all members of our community, and will communicate some happy news during a time of great stress and uncertainty for many of our users.



Christie Menzo  
BRANCH MANAGER, CAMERON  
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY



**TO:** CHAIR AND TRUSTEES  
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY BOARD

**FROM:** CHIEF LIBRARIAN  
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY

**DATE:** 2020 MAY 21

**SUBJECT:** COVID-19 AND LIBRARY OPERATIONS

**RECOMMENDATION:**

**THAT** the Board receive this report for information.

### REPORT

The COVID-19 Pandemic has significantly impacted library staff and library operations. This report summarizes current and planned library service, and impact on staff.

#### Background

- On Monday, March 16, BPL announced the closure of all libraries to the public, effective Wednesday, March 18. On Tuesday, March 17, libraries remained open, but physical distancing measures were put in place, including limiting the number of patrons in the facility at a time and removing seating and computers.
- Effective Tuesday, March 24, further measures were put in place to reduce the number of staff working at facilities. Cameron, Tommy Douglas and McGill branches closed to staff (except Building Service Workers). Metrotown remains open. Some staff work part of their week at home.

#### Current Library Services

Although library branches are closed, patrons can still access library services in several ways:

- Phone and email reference service is available Monday to Friday, 10am to 5pm. In April, we answered 374 questions.
- Patrons can register for a library card by phone. In April, we registered 96 new patrons.
- Staff have redirected spending on library materials from print and other physical materials to ebooks and other materials. In addition to buying new titles, staff have increased the number of materials that users can check out and have on hold. Highest demand has been for children’s material.

	Apr 2019	Apr 2020	Incr/Decr	%Change
e-Book circulation	5,616	19,487	13,871	247%
e-Audiobook circulation	3,462	6,163	2,701	78%
New Overdrive users	177	971	794	449%
Number of titles acquired	149	2,669	2,520	1691%

Staff's primary focus is to use a community-led approach to identify and meet community needs during this time.

- Community librarians continue to work with Burnaby-based organizations on needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic. The first need identified was a confirmed list of organizations and services available in Burnaby during the pandemic. Working with contacts and partners, librarians created lists and guides that we made available both on our website and the official burnabycoronavirus.com website. We have heard that the guides are heavily used by our partners to support Burnaby residents.
- Community librarians started attending programs hosted virtually by service providers to connect directly with Burnaby residents. These e-visits are focused on removing barriers to access our digital resources and to create awareness of the services we are providing. Some examples are visiting a youth program to talk about job search resources, a LINC class to connect with new immigrants learning English, and a class for people with developmental disabilities. In April, community librarians had 70 outreach visits (all virtual), and made 126 connections with community partners.
- Library staff continue to support city priorities such as the call centre and the warming centre
- Some projects are continuing, including the design of the Cameron Library, the website redesign project, the Public Service Staffing Model project, and some facilities projects (to take advantage of facilities closures).
- Christie Menzo (Branch Manager, Cameron) has launched Beyond the Box, a staff innovation initiative. This comes from staff desire to share ideas of what we could be doing as a library system to support our community in this challenging time of social isolation, distancing, and economic hardship. We have identified several key challenges and areas of need through conversations with community, partners and patrons. Staff are invited to pitch ideas to address these challenges and needs, and Christie's team will then help to refine chosen ideas for further development.

## Recovery Planning

The Chief Librarian has been extensively involved in high-level and tactical citywide recovery planning with city staff, and in information sharing and strategic conversations with other chief librarians both regionally through InterLINK and provincially through the Association of BC Public Library Directors.

BPL supervisors have been developing detailed plans for immediate priorities, and longer term plans for further recoveries.

On May 6, the government of BC released [BC's Restart Plan](#). Under the plan, libraries can open from May 18 onwards with "enhanced protocols" and "sufficient distancing". This does not mean that BPL will open all branches right away. In line with the City of Burnaby's approach, and working closely with neighbouring libraries, BPL is adopting a cautious, conservative approach to resuming services.

### *Immediate Priorities*

- BPL will launch a contactless pick-up service starting June 1. Patrons will be able to place materials on hold, then book a time slot to pick materials up.
- Home Library delivery service to patrons in their homes will also resume on June 1.
- To support these priorities, ordering of books and other physical materials will resume.

Staff safety is our number one priority in resuming these services. Detailed safety plans have been developed for the services, and supervisors are also working under WorkSafeBC guidelines and with the City of Burnaby Occupational Health & Safety Manager, the Library Joint Occupational Health and Safety Committee, and with CUPE 23 to make sure that safety protocols are developed, communicated, and adhered to. Measures include:

- physical distancing between staff, and between staff and patrons by moving workstations, implementing one-way traffic, and including signage outside elevators;

- increased cleaning protocols, with a particular focus on high-touch surfaces and washrooms;
- installation of physical barriers where physical distancing isn't possible
- provision of and instruction in effective use of personal protective equipment where physical barriers are not an option

#### *Later Priorities*

Over the summer, we plan to gradually increase services, maintaining staff safety as our primary focus. Next phase is to:

- support technology needs through access to wifi and computers with in-community solutions like wifi hotspots, and limited opening of libraries to provide technology access and support
- begin in-person community outreach with focus on most vulnerable communities

Later in the summer, if conditions allow and with appropriate physical distancing measures, we will:

- open libraries for most services
- resume some in-person library programs
- resume community outreach

#### **Internal Communication**

Communication is vitally important during this time, and we're using various ways of staying in touch and sharing information, with a focus on virtual methods.

- Weekly all-staff virtual meetings are an opportunity for staff to connect and to ask questions of Beth and other exempt staff. CUPE 23 is also holding regular virtual meetings with members.
- Updates are posted on the staff intranet, which is accessible to staff outside the library, on a regular basis. There are many updates each week. Email is also used to communicate with staff, although a change in authentication for staff not working in the library has added an additional step that is a technical barrier for some staff.
- Supervisors continue to focus on supporting staff, answering questions, and making sure that staff stay connected to the workplace and to each other.
- Regular group meetings for work and project teams take place

#### **External Communication**

A series of online and print communication that we called the Let's Connect campaign is signaling that we're still providing public services even though library branches are closed. The emphasis is that staff are available to help guide people and answer their questions, in addition to us pushing out digital collections. Ads appear weekly in the print edition of the *Burnaby Now*, run on our social media pages, and large posters have been printed and placed in the windows of our library branches.


## NEED SOME SUPPORT?

### LET'S CONNECT

We can refer you to agencies that help with finances, housing, technology and more. Contact us to learn about services in your community, and get information on free and low-cost resources.

📞 604-436-5400  
✉️ [eref@bpl.bc.ca](mailto:eref@bpl.bc.ca)

Monday to Friday, 10am – 5pm

 Burnaby Public Library  
[www.bpl.bc.ca](http://www.bpl.bc.ca)

## INFORMATION OVERLOAD?

### LET'S CONNECT

We know it's tough keeping up with the latest public health updates, changes to services and options for financial support. We'll get you the answers you need when they're hard to find.

📞 604-436-5400  
✉️ [eref@bpl.bc.ca](mailto:eref@bpl.bc.ca)

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## RUN OUT OF BOOKS?

### LET'S CONNECT

We have thousands of e-books and audiobooks you can borrow from home. Contact us for help with getting started, reading ideas, or to sign up for a library card and start reading today.

📞 604-436-5400  
✉️ [eref@bpl.bc.ca](mailto:eref@bpl.bc.ca)

Monday to Friday, 10am – 5pm

 Burnaby Public Library  
[www.bpl.bc.ca](http://www.bpl.bc.ca)

## NEED TO GET ONLINE?

### LET'S CONNECT

We're just a phone call away. Get help with finding internet access, using your device, applying for benefits online, joining virtual meetings and staying in touch with family and friends.

📞 604-436-5400  
✉️ [eref@bpl.bc.ca](mailto:eref@bpl.bc.ca)

Monday to Friday, 10am – 5pm

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## CANCELLING A SUBSCRIPTION?

### LET'S CONNECT

Read newspapers and magazines from around the world. Practice a new language. Learn from industry experts. Get access for free with your library card. Call us if you need one!

📞 604-436-5400  
✉️ [eref@bpl.bc.ca](mailto:eref@bpl.bc.ca)

Monday to Friday, 10am – 5pm

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In addition, a *Burnaby Now* request for information on planned reopenings led to two articles:

- <https://www.burnabynow.com/news/wi-fi-ebooks-and-curbside-all-part-of-burnaby-library-s-covid-19-plan-1.24132062>
- <https://www.burnabynow.com/news/burnaby-library-reclaiming-role-as-authority-on-research-fact-finding-1.24131606>

Staff are currently working on communication about curbside pick-up.

### Staff layoff and recall

- On Friday, April 3, CUPE 23, the City of Burnaby and the Library reached agreement on a Letter of Understanding (LoU) that included a process to lay off and recall staff and to establish a 42-day wage protection period from the date of layoff, during which time laid off staff will continue to be paid.
- 185 staff received verbal notice of layoff by phone on Thursday, April 9, which was followed up by a letter. The effective date of layoff was Wednesday, April 15.
- 72 staff have been recalled to date. This includes all full-time staff, all BSWs, and all regular and temporary full-time and part-time librarians. In addition, many part-time clerks have been recalled to support curbside pick-up, Home Library delivery, and materials ordering.



This has been a difficult and challenging time for all BPL staff, whether working or laid off. I have been humbled and heartened by the kindness and compassion that staff are showing each other, and by the hard work, creativity and passion that staff are bringing to their current work and to ideas for next steps and reimagined services. I would like to express my sincere thanks to all staff for their commitment, their questions, and their support.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Beth Davies', written in black ink.

Beth Davies  
CHIEF LIBRARIAN  
BURNABY PUBLIC LIBRARY