

BPL Board Minutes

Minutes of a regular meeting held December 11, 2025 at 6:01pm at the Boardroom, Bob Prittie
Metrotown Branch, 6100 Willingdon Ave, Burnaby, BC V5H 4N5

Attendance

Board: Anna Lu (Chair)
Sarah Bartnik
Hakam Bhaloo
Gene Blishen
Raj Hundal
Shiraz Ramji
Mandy Yang

Staff: Beth Davies (Secretary)
Rebecca Clarke
Amy Girard
Christel Johnson
Jessica Lee
Jenni Madison
Trish Mau
Heidi Schiller

Guests: Chris Mikowski

Regrets: Maita Santiago

We respectfully acknowledge that Burnaby Public Library is located on the unceded territories of the [xʷməθkʷəy̓əm \(Musqueam\)](#), [Skwxwú7mesh \(Squamish\)](#), [səlilwətaʔ \(Tsleil-Waututh\)](#), and [kʷikwəʔəm \(Kwikwetlem\)](#) Peoples. Each Nation has distinct histories and distinct traditional territories that fully or partially encompass the city of Burnaby.

We encourage you to learn more about the Host Nations whose ancestors have occupied and used these lands, including parts of present-day Burnaby, for thousands of years.

1. Agenda

That the agenda be received as presented.

Moved by Mandy Yang
Seconded by Sarah Bartnik
Carried.

2. Minutes

That the minutes of the regular meeting held October 16, 2025 be adopted as circulated.

Moved by Hakam Bhaloo

Seconded by Mandy Yang

Carried.

3. Presentation

3.1 CUPE Local 23

The CUPE Local 23 President, Library Chair, Library Second Vice Chair, and Library Steward Amy Girard gave a presentation on the scope of the union's work. They described how they aid staff with negotiating through the collective bargaining process, grievances, job reclassifications, and ensuring equity to create a happy and supported workforce. They highlighted the high quantity of precarious workers at the library and their desire to support them. Trustee Sarah Bartnik asked for clarity on how many of the precarious workers enjoy their flexible schedules, how many want help getting regular full-time work, and how they differentiate them. The Library Chair replied that in her estimation the majority of these workers are seeking non-precarious positions, and that further analysis on this would be helpful. Trustee Gene Blishen inquired about the union's view on living wage. The CUPE Local 23 President replied that the union supports living wage and wants all staff to make enough money to support themselves. Board Trustees shared their appreciation of the union's work.

Chris Mikowski left the meeting at 6:25pm.

4. Reports

4.1 Board Chair

The Board Chair acknowledged Trustee Gene Blishen's retirement from the Board and thanked him for his service. Trustees shared their kudos as well.

4.2 Council Liaison

Council Liaison sent regrets for this meeting.

4.3 InterLINK Representative

InterLINK Representative Gene Blishen reported there will be a change in the Interlink governance model in 2026. They will be reducing the Board size from 18 members to 9. Library systems not represented on the Board may still be called on to participate in some capacity. He also reported the 2026 Budget will be presented at the next meeting, which will include a slight increase in dues.

5. Items for Decision

5.1 Staff presentation schedule

The Chief librarian presented the proposed 2026 schedule. Board Chair Anna Lu suggested an amendment to October's presentation to allow for a presentation better suited for Canadian Library Month.

That the Library Board approve an amendment to the staff presentation schedule to move the Adult Programming presentation to July.

That the Library Board approve the proposed schedule of staff presentations to Board in 2026 as amended.

Moved by Gene Blishen

Seconded by Sarah Bartnik

Carried.

6. Items for Information

6.1 Equity Working Groups

The Chief Librarian reported that due to a lack of funds the Equity Working Groups in their current form will be ending at the end of 2025. She explained that the Working Groups were never budgeted for, and we were only able to support these groups because our budget was in surplus, which it no longer is. She acknowledged that they have received feedback from staff and the public expressing concern and disappointment over this decision. She expressed that this decision was not taken lightly and that much equity work takes place outside of these groups. In 2026, staff will begin a project to create a framework to continue supporting equity-seeking groups including funding recommendations.

Trustee Gene Blishen said these groups are doing really important work that should be continued and we should do whatever possible to continue supporting this work. He suggested using funds from the Endowment Fund. Library Board Chair Anna Lu shared her surprise over the decision and concern that the board was not consulted prior to the decision being made. The Chief Librarian explained that because this is an operational matter, this is not a decision that would normally be brought to the board for discussion. She acknowledged that this was an oversight in hindsight, given the priority that the Board places on equity, diversity and inclusion.

That the Board approve up to \$25,000 from the Endowment Fund to continue and evaluate the work of the Equity Working Groups.

Moved by Gene Blishen
Seconded by Hakam Bhaloo
Carried.

That staff bring forward a report on a framework for creating and supporting equity seeking groups going forward.

Moved by Anna Lu
Seconded by Raj Hundal
Carried.

6.2 Retired employees

Library Board Chair Anna Lu congratulated staff on their retirement. Trustee Sarah Bartnik was impressed by the longevity of retiring staff's service.

7. Other Business

No other business to report.

8. Adjournment

- 8.1 **That** the regular meeting adjourn and that the Board resolve itself into an in camera meeting from which the public is excluded to consider patron bans and bargaining.

Moved by Shiraz Ramji
Seconded by Raj Hundal
Carried.

The meeting adjourned at 7:25pm.

Anna Lu (Meeting Chair)

Beth Davies (Secretary)