

2023-04-14 Executive Meeting Minutes

Meeting Minutes - Executive Committee Meeting

A full PDF Package of the meeting is available [at this link](#).

Meeting Information

Date: April 14, 2023

Location: Lac La Biche Public Library

Attendees: Vicky Lefebvre (Chair), Jen Anheliger (Vice-Chair), Matthew McLennan, Curtis Schoepp, Dwayne Spicer, Larry Tiedemann, Barbara Smith, Maxine Fodness, Josh Crick, Leslie Cusack

Guests: Jodi Dahlgren (LMC Chair), Maureen Penn (Lac La Biche County Libraries Director), Chasity Desjarlais - Kikino Métis Settlement, Maureen Jacknife - Elizabeth Métis Settlement, Katie Blair - Beaver Lake Cree Nation, June Laboucane (online) - Fishing Lake Métis Settlement, Jerrica John - Kehewin Cree Nation, Priscilla Boudreau - Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement, Mary Jane Quinney (online) - Frog Lake First Nation

Staff: James MacDonald

The meeting was called to order at 10:05 am.

Land Acknowledgment

Northern Lights Library System respectfully acknowledges that the land on which we gather is Treaty 6 territory and a traditional meeting ground and home for many Indigenous Peoples, including Cree, Saulteaux, Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, and Nakota Sioux Peoples.

1. Approval of the Agenda

M1: Leslie Cusack moved that the agenda be accepted as amended.
Carried.

2. Approval of Previous Minutes of [February 10th](#)

M2: Josh Crick moved that the minutes of February 10, 2023 be accepted.
Carried

2.1 Approval of Previous Minutes of [February 24th](#)

M3: Barb Smith moved that the minutes of February 24, 2023 be accepted.
Carried

2.2 Ratification of Email Motions

Briefing Note: Email motions and votes are governed by our procedural [policy](#).

Dwayne Spicer moved at 8:17 pm on Wednesday, March 8th to approve the expense of James attending the international conference at a cost of \$3000.00. This motion carried

M4: Maxine Fodness moves to ratify the email motion that Dwayne Spicer moved at 8:17 pm on Wednesday, March 8th, to approve the expense of James attending the international conference at a cost of \$3000.00.
Carried.

3. Chair's Report (verbal)

Report on action items from last meeting & Chair Report

[Thank you letter to Minister Shulz](#) **[System's thank you letter to Minister Shulz](#)**

3.1 ALTA Report (verbal)

Jenn Anheligher reported on recent meetings with Alberta Municipalities and resolutions made there in 2019. There was discussion on how to move needed resolutions forward through the government and how to leverage current advocacy work.

A: Jenn is to report to the system advocacy group in May and bring the resolutions forward for discussion in that group. The resolutions include the following topics: 1) populations figures used to calculate grants, 2) the current grant structure disincentivizing cooperation, 3) the MLIS requirements, 4) the

requirements for the number of board members in small municipalities, and 5) the role of PLSB.

M5:Larry Tiedemann moved to accept Jenn's report as information.
Carried.

4. Financial Report

Briefing note: [This report](#) includes a link to our month-to-month financials for 2023.

M6: Dwayne Spicer moved to accept the financial report as presented.
Carried

5. Indigenous Advisory Circle

Briefing Note: This is our first meeting of the newly formed Indigenous Advisory Circle. [The mandate](#) for the circle was adopted in our last general board meeting. We welcome the following:

1. Chastity Desjarlais - Kikino Métis Settlement
2. Maureen Jacknife and Tegan Vacheresse (online) - Elizabeth Métis Settlement
3. Katie Blair - Beaver Lake Cree Nation
4. June Laboucane - Fishing Lake Métis Settlement
5. John Jerrica - Kehewin Cree Nation
6. Archie Handel - Buffalo Lake Métis Settlement
7. Mary Jane Quinney and Clifton Cross - Frog Lake First Nation

Introduction and discussion on the purpose of the advisory circle and an overview of the OROS grant and library services.

5.1 OROS Grant Report

Briefing Note: The province requires the annual report on the grant, which must be approved by the Board (or the Executive acting on behalf of the Board). [See the report here.](#)

M7: Barb Smith moved to approve the On Reserve On Settlement annual report as presented.
Carried

5.2 OROS Grant funding distribution

Briefing note: After consultation with member library managers and board chairs, we developed a [model for distributing OROS grant funding](#) to local libraries. For a recap on the OROS grant, see [this briefing note](#).

M8: Maxine Fodness moved to accept the OROS grant funding model as information.
Carried.

Library Tour and Lunch 12:00 - 1:00

6. Provincial Grant update

Briefing Note: The province announced an increase in library funding on March 1st. You can read the [letter from Minister Schulz](#) for more details. This change includes a move from the [2016 population](#) to the [2019 population](#). We need to make a number of choices as a result.

What does this mean for the system budget?

An increase in the provincial operating budget from \$4.70 to \$4.75 based on the 2019 population is an increase of \$46,157

Potential revenue from levies based on 2019 numbers is an increase of \$8,910.18 (\$1,803.85 of which would be allocated to book allotment).

The increase in revenue to the 1% admin fee on the Rural Service Grant is \$174.27

The increase in system operating funds from the OROS grant is \$679

The total projected increase in system funding (operating and capital) is **\$55,920.45**

What might this mean for our libraries and municipal partners regarding our levies?

According to our agreement, we base our library levy on the population used by the provincial government to calculate library operating grants. Coming as it does in the middle of our approved budget this presents some problems: Most municipalities have already paid their levies based on the 2016 numbers. Some municipalities go up in population and some go down. Library boards have not yet paid their levies. Libraries have already passed their budgets on 2016 numbers.

We have at least 3 options:

- 1)** Continue with the approved budget based on the 2016 population numbers and charge levies according to that. This is potentially outside the agreement and could be contentious. However, it is the least disruptive to budgets.

- 2)** Stick to the letter of the agreement and change to the 2019 population numbers. This is likely to be contentious and the most disruptive. It would require cutting checks to those that have already paid and billing those whose populations went up. There are a few strong advocates for this approach. A switch mid-budget may assist some library boards whose populations fall. Cold Lake makes a good example as the municipality whose population falls the most in absolute numbers (775).

COLD LAKE:

2016 population = 15,736
Levy = \$83,588.16
Rural Services Grant = \$23,034.12
M.D. Bonnyville Book Allotment = \$8,535.29
Cold Lake Book Allotment = \$33,832.40
New provincial operating grant = \$92,782

Total income after NLLS levy = \$74,595.65

2019 population = 14,961
Levy = \$79,442.91
Rural Services Grant = \$21,367.87
M.D. Bonnyville Book Allotment = \$8,138.43

Cold Lake Book Allotment = \$32,166.15
New provincial operating grant = \$92,782

Total income after NLLS levy = \$75,011.54

A switch to the 2019 population numbers mid-budget would net Cold Lake Public Library \$415.89.

3) Charge levies in 2023 on the lesser population between 2019 and 2016. This would largely wipe out the gains in provincial funding for the system in 2023. However, it would likely be the least contentious.

The Levy. According to our agreement, the system levy is tied to the population used by the provincial government to calculate library operating grants. This update to the 2019 numbers comes mid-budget, and all but one of our municipalities have already paid their 2023 levy. Therefore, changing the population figures would require us to reimburse overages and bill underpayments. This could get contentious quickly. Another option would be to adopt a one-time charging model on the lowest of the two numbers 2016/2019. This would mean cutting checks to municipalities that have already overpaid and ignoring any “underpayments.” When library boards are billed in June, we could likewise use the 2019 or 2016 populations, whichever is lower. This would come at a cost to the system of **\$35,354.20** overall. This seems like the least disruptive way to handle the situation, as it comes in the middle of an already approved budget.

The Rural Services Grant. Where NLLS acts as the board for a municipality (generally counties) we receive a grant of \$5.55/resident (now \$5.60/resident). This is now based on the 2019 population list. This money is redistributed to libraries as per the instructions of the municipality (minus a 1% administration fee). As a result of the change to 2019 numbers, some library boards will see a decrease in funding from their counties. However, the province has ensured that this grant will increase by at least 5%. This is a total of \$358,574. As a result of that minimum 5% increase, we could consider ensuring that every library gets at least the 2016 funding they budgeted for this year. This would come at a cost to the system of **\$908.43**.

The Book Allotment. The shift to the 2019 population also has an impact here. The overall impact is an additional \$1,803.85 entering the book allotment fund. However, changing this capital budget mid-year will be quite disruptive to our financial tracking. Each library has an individual account and

it would need to be adjusted by \$2.15 for every person gained or lost by the population change across 49 accounts. If we choose to use the lower of the two populations for the levy the logical step would be to recalculate the book allotment accordingly. We might also choose to leave the Book allotment as already constituted. That option would leave \$1,803.85 of new money in the system's revenue.

M9: Dwayne Spicer moved to continue with the approved budget based on the 2016 population numbers and charge levies according to those numbers. Carried.

A: ED to compile letters to be sent to all municipalities and library boards outlining the levies in 2024. ED to send the letter to the Executive in advance of distribution.

A: Jodi Dahlgren to request from the library manager's council ideas on how to best utilize the provincial increase in funding for discussion at the next LMC.

7. Population and the Levy

Briefing note: The town of Vermilion (among others) has expressed concern about using the same population figures used by the province to calculate the grant to also calculate the NLLS levy. They've asked that the Executive revisit the population figures discussion and consider using the most up-to-date population figures available. other systems do this and have language in their agreements, such as Chinook Arch:

Chinook Arch agreement language:

"The population of a municipality that is a Party to this Agreement shall be deemed to be the most recent official estimate of the population for the municipality published by the Government of Alberta for the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the levy is made"

Speaking to system directors that follow this model is not without difficulty. The province, for example, published 2021 numbers only to retract them a few months later, leading to confusion amongst system members. Using the latest numbers does not allow a municipality time to lodge disputes with provincial estimates.

[This spreadsheet shows](#) the effect of using various population figures on NLLS revenues.

Using the 2021 Federal census would reduce the population by 3,366 people (\$35,658.38). This is a 2% budget reduction. Using the federal census would come with the benefit of 4-year stability. However, it would likely lead to complaints in later years when figures do not keep up with rapidly changing populations.

Using the 2021 Alberta Treasury Board numbers would reduce the population by 1,576 people (\$16,662.78). This is about a 1% budget reduction.

We can amend our agreement with a vote of 2 thirds of the board.

8. Plan of Service 2024 - 2026

Briefing note: The current Plan of Service expires at the end of 2023. The Executive is empowered to prepare and plan the next plan of service. They are generally prepared for a 3-year period. The Executive must discuss how they'd like to proceed with the development of the plan. A first draft planning schedule [is available here](#) with potential costs.

The Plan of Service committee was elected in our last general board meeting and is comprised of the following:

1. Vicky Lefebvre (Chair)
2. Jenn Anheligher (Vice Chair)
3. Dwayne Spicer
4. Wanda Cochrane
5. Josh Crick
6. Tracy Woloshyniuk
7. Maureen Penn
8. D'arcy Evans
9. James MacDonald

A: ED to call a pre-planning meeting with the Plan of Service Committee.

9. Policy updates

Briefing note: The policy committee met on April 6th, 2023. See [the minutes](#) from that meeting.

POLICIES FOR REVISION:

Section 4:1B - [Loan of Resource Policy](#)

Briefing Note: Added policy language to require staff to check materials out before taking them from library premises, require proof of address to issue a library card, and clarify renewals and extended loan periods. Some grammar updates.

Section 1:3R - [Executive Director Grievance](#)

Briefing Note: Grammar and simplification of text.

Section 1:3Q - [Grievances](#)

Briefing Note: Grammar and simplification of text.

Section 1:1P - [Performance Management](#)

Briefing Note: Grammar and simplification of text.

Section 1:1O - [Long Standing Service Awards](#)

Briefing Note: Grammar and simplification of text.

Section 1:1J - [Vacation](#)

Briefing Note: Added language to require the establishment of vacation schedules twice each year. Grammar and simplification of text.

Section 1:1F - [Reduction and Termination](#)

Briefing Note: Grammar and simplification of text.

Section 2:1P - [Communication Protocol - NLLS Board](#)

Briefing Note: Grammar and simplification of text.

Section 1:1E - [Probationary Periods](#)

Briefing Note: Grammar and simplification of text.

POLICIES TO DELETE

Section 1:3N - Outside Computers

Briefing Note: This policy was incorporated into the Staff Network Policy Section 1:3Z and is therefore redundant.

M10: Barb Smith moved that we return the Vacation policy to the Policy Committee for further work.
Carried.

M11: Leslie Cusack Moved that we add a line to the Performance Appraisal Policy that the ED must sign off on all performance evaluations.
Carried.

M12: Curtis Schoepp moved to send the policies, except the vacation policy, as amended, to the Board for a vote to adopt.
Carried.

11. Annual General Meeting Discussion

Briefing Note: Discussion regarding Executive positions up for election, the two consecutive term limit, and the ability to campaign. A discussion on professional development for the board.

Vicky announced that she did not intend to run for the role of Chair in May. A general discussion was held on leadership positions on the NLLS Board and the coming annual general meeting. Vicky's many contributions to NLLS as a board member and as the Chair were acknowledged.

10. In-Camera – Personnel – standing performance evaluation discussion.

M13: Matthew McLennan moved to go in-camera at 2:21 pm.

M14: Josh Crick moved to go out of camera at 3:05 pm.

12. Adjournment

M15: Jennifer Anheligher moved to adjourn at 3:05 pm.