



# from the Board Table

## 2020 Annual General Meeting

On January 18, 2020, Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) Board of Trustees convened for the 2020 Annual General Meeting (AGM). The Board received an orientation for new and returning Trustees, learned about VIRL's Advocacy efforts and goals, and how VIRL is "not your typical library."

Trustees also toured the Creativity Commons and gained firsthand experience of the 21st Century library through a series of technology-related tasks.



*VIRL's Board of Trustees visited the Creativity Commons for a chance to try STEAM (Science Technology Engineering Arts and Math) learning stations, most of which are available to their communities - rural and urban.*

# Not Your Typical Library

In many ways, VIRL is unique from municipal libraries and even other regional systems. Our wide and varied geographic jurisdiction, our mix of urban, rural and remote communities, and the high number of branches in our system are some factors that set VIRL apart. In this presentation, the Trustees learned about some of the important initiatives and projects from 2019, including:

- An explanation of our pooled budgeting system
- Our floating collection
- Our diverse array of free programming
- The elimination of children's fines
- The launch of our video game collection
- Our award winning Indigenous Voices program
- The launch of cultural literacy kits
- Opening of new and renovated facilities in Parksville, Sidney/North Saanich, and Sayward
- Our revamped Creativity Commons (which the Trustees had an opportunity to experience on a field trip)



# Advocacy Presentation

The purpose of this insightful presentation was to help our Trustees understand the many organizations, provincially and federally, focused on advocating on behalf of municipal and regional library systems in Canada, how VIRL has been involved, and a roadmap for the path ahead.

In 2019, advocacy efforts focused on increasing funding for libraries and raising awareness about restrictive practices being imposed on libraries from major publishing companies related to lending eBooks and eAudiobooks. The Canadian Urban Libraries Council launched a campaign to bring these challenges to the national level and VIRL was actively involved through letters to our Federal candidates during the election, a meeting at the Legislature with the Minister of Education, and from the nearly dozen communities and regional districts that signed a statement of Equitable Access to eBooks.

The Board will continue to be apprised of ongoing advocacy opportunities and campaigns as they arise.



# Creativity Commons

## Field Trip

As part of the Trustees' orientation about all of the amazing and cutting-edge technologies and resources at VIRC, staff set up a field trip to the Creativity Commons at the Nanaimo Harbourfront branch to provide Trustees with firsthand, tactile experiences with the following:

- Virtual Reality
- 3D Printing
- STEAM Resources, such as Felting and Tech Boxes
- Gaming/E-sports
- Recording Studio



# Finance

## Finance Report

**Balance Sheet:** The balance sheet of \$33.0 million shows a healthy balance of cash and investments of \$5.8 million at the end of December and a year to date operating deficit of \$2.9 million.

**Revenue and Expenditures:** The deficit is due mostly due to an appropriation related to an MFA borrowing, as there is a timing difference between the capital costs being incurred and the repayment of the long-term borrowing. Other than this, revenues were generally in line with expectations and expenditures were within budget. Appropriations to reserves are recorded on a monthly basis. Transfers from reserves are recorded when the expenditures have been substantially completed and adjustments will be made for reserve-funded projects at year end.

**Summary:** VIRL's finances indicate that results are in line with expectations and significant projects are currently either complete or underway.

## Reserves Report

The Board of Trustees is provided with updated reserves information at each meeting. At the end of December, the reserves stood at a balance of \$6.2 million. Appropriations to reserves are recorded on a monthly basis. Year to date withdrawals consist of amounts for debt servicing and projects at Parksville, Sayward, Sidney, Sooke, Chemainus and others, as well as purchases of furniture and equipment, replacement of a delivery vehicle, and investments in IT software and hardware.



*The community came to celebrate the opening of the new Sayward branch, which held its Official Opening on December 21.*

# Facilities Update

**Campbell River:** VIRL has selected the site of the current branch on Shoppers Row for the new branch. The next step is to work with the Strathcona Regional District to secure funding through the Municipal Finance Authority.

**Chemainus:** The branch opened to the public on January 13, 2020 to widespread acclaim. Grand Opening celebrations are slated for March 7.

**Courtenay:** VIRL has initiated planning this project and we await an announcement from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant.

**Ladysmith:** Ladysmith is looking to initiate a mixed-use project on property owned by the town, which could include space for a new branch. No recent discussions have taken place.

**Masset:** VIRL is moving forward with the floorplan and other planning documents for the Masset branch. We await an announcement from the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program grant.

**North Saanich:** The proposed site at the Panorama Centre is part of the Agricultural Land Reserve. VIRL awaits further direction from North Saanich.

**Port Alberni:** VIRL has selected Lowe Hammond Row to complete the architectural work. Project planning will commence shortly.

**Sandspit:** Discussions are on hold while VIRL and SD50 work to resolve an issue surrounding use of the space.

**Sayward:** The first of VIRL's prototype branches opened to the public on December 18 with Grand Opening celebrations three days later on December 21. The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive.

**Sooke:** The Development Permit was approved by the District of Sooke on November 25 and VIRL has submitted the Building Permit application.

**Tahsis:** VIRL continues discussion around potential sites or other options for service delivery.

**Tofino:** VIRL awaits direction from Tofino as to the placement of a new branch.

**Woss:** The Village of Woss has identified the site for the new branch. VIRL staff have commenced with the necessary planning work in preparation of a prototype branch, including work to produce a bid package.



# 2020 Elections and New Trustees



## Board Chair

Brenda Leigh, who represents the Strathcona Regional District, has 17 total years' experience on the VIRL Board of Trustees. In her role as Board Chair, Leigh also chairs the Executive Committee.



## Vice Chair

Mayor Gabriele (Gaby) Wickstrom, from the Town of Port McNeill, was elected as Vice Chair. This is Wickstrom's third appointment to the Board. Wickstrom also serves on the Executive Committee.

## 2020 Executive Committee

**Members at Large (from back left to right):** Penny Cote, Lynda Llewellyn, Nicole Minions, Daniel Arbour, Gaby Wickstrom (Vice Chair), Manno Theos, Brenda Patrick. **From front left to right:** Brenda Leigh (Board Chair), Rosemary Bonanno (Executive Director), Debra Toporowski. Absent from photo: Evan Putterill and Fred Robertson.



# New Trustees

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This was a year with a relatively small changeover in Board composition. We welcome back 32 of our Trustees with six new Trustees joining the Board. They are:



**Jennifer Capps**

City of Duncan



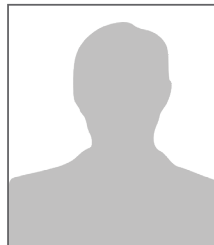
**Colleen Evans**

City of Campbell River



**Sharie Minions**

City of Port Alberni



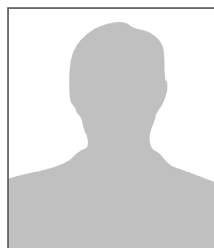
**Blaise Salmon**

Cowichan Valley Regional District



**Ian Savage**

District of Lantzville



**Jeff Virtanen**

Town of Ladysmith