MANAGEMENT REPORT

Date: October 22, 2015
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Meeting Date: October 28, 2015

TO: Library Board
FROM: Sandra Singh
SUBJECT: Board Policy Revisions

SUMMARY
As part of the ongoing review of Vancouver Public Library policies to ensure relevance and accuracy, over the next few Board meetings staff will bring forward policies that require Library Board direction to amend, replace or rescind. The current report addresses four Board policies.

PURPOSE
This report is for decision.

RECOMMENDATIONS
A) That the following three Vancouver Public Library Board policies are rescinded:
   • Furniture
   • Inclement Weather
   • Statistics

B) That the following Vancouver Public Library Board policy is modified, as described in this report:
   • Technology Vision Statement
COMMITTEE DISCUSSION

Committee members sought clarification on a few items. Regarding statistics, Trustee Epstein asked if the Policy ensured that future staff and Board were required to keep statistics and report on statistics. Staff clarified that both the City and the Province require the reporting of key business statistics, with the Province requiring a more robust metrics framework. Similar clarification was sought re: the Furniture policy – whether there were other instruments to require accessibility in facilities. Staff noted that the Building Code now includes robust details on accessibility requirements. Staff noted that the Background information in the Technology Statement was not intended to be included in the original policy statement.

CHIEF LIBRARIAN COMMENTS

The Chief Librarian concurs with the recommendations.

POLICY

The policies included in this report are under the purview of the Vancouver Public Library Board.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

When the policies included in this report were created, they were intended to provide direction in areas that would impact library service delivery and public use of library services in the community. The ongoing review and revision of Library Board policies is necessary to ensure their accuracy and to provide an opportunity for additional feedback and discussion as required.

DISCUSSION

Staff have identified four policies in this report which require Library Board direction to amend, replace or rescind.

Staff recommend the following three policies to be rescinded:

- Furniture: this Policy was approved in 1986 and was intended to provide direction for a 10-year period through 1996. The contents are no longer relevant.

- Inclement Weather: this Policy was first approved in 1991 and subsequently revised in 2002. The Library follows comprehensive procedures related to system closures that include inclement weather as well as other extraordinary conditions. The contents are no longer relevant.
• Statistics: this Policy was first approved in 1986 and subsequently revised in 2002. In 2015, statistics are compiled as required for a variety of purposes to assist with the strategic planning and effective operation of public library service delivery. This Policy is not required.

Staff recommend the following policy to be modified:

• Technology Vision Statement: this Policy was approved in 2010. Given the creation of the Digital Strategy in subsequent years, staff recommend a background paragraph is removed, a link to the current Digital Strategy approved in 2014 be added, and the name of the Policy be changed to “Technology and Public Service Policy” to reflect a broader policy context.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications to this report.

FINAL REMARKS

The ongoing review of existing Library Board policies will continue and future reports in November and December 2015 will include additional Policies for consideration.
"Disabled patrons should be able to read, consult reference books and write, without being segregated from other patrons."

- The Accessible Canadian Library: A planning workbook for barrier-free environment, p.20

Vancouver Public Library subscribes to the "access path concept" of library service when it is not possible to render the library environment totally accessible. The access path concept means that library staff shall endeavour to provide access to and service in retrieving for the special needs client material that is out-of-reach. This document gives direction in planning for special needs populations during the next ten years.

**VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY SHALL ENDEAVOUR TO MAKE ITS PREMISES BARRIER-FREE BY:**

- placing library equipment for public use in alcoves or recessed areas away from traffic areas.
- removing low hanging light fixtures or other objects less than 80 inches from the ground as well as objects protruding more than 4 inches from wall surfaces.
- providing barrier-free aisles at least 36 inches wide between book stacks.
- planning for enough space in reading and reference areas for a guide-dog to lie down free of aisle and public area traffic.
- adapting and labelling one reading table per floor at Central and one per Branch library so that it is wheelchair accessible.
- executing seating plans in public areas which recognize the needs of persons unable to walk long distances or stand for extended periods of time.
- assigning one staff member to monitor technological advances in the fields of aids for the disabled individual.
- instituting a system of alerting staff when a disabled patron needs assistance in accessing parts of the library collection he/she cannot use independently.
- providing optical magnifiers in all libraries in the city of Vancouver.

**VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY SHALL ENDEAVOUR TO RENDER ITS CARD CATALOGUES AND INDEXES MORE ACCESSIBLE BY:**

- labelling catalogue drawers clearly with a 12 point legible typeface such as Helvetica on space for 14 point.
- assuring that drawer handles are easy to grasp and removable for those with limited finger dexterity and movement.
- arranging accessible tables and chairs in proximity of the catalogue for semi-ambulatory and wheelchair patrons.
- assuring adequate room for wheelchair patrons to move amongst banks of catalogue cabinets and index stands.
VANCOUVER PUBLIC LIBRARY SHALL ENDEAVOUR TO MAKE ITS FACILITIES AND COLLECTIONS MORE ACCESSIBLE BY:

• assuring that operating controls on micro-format readers require minimal dexterity and a reach of less than 36 inches.
• planning that one (1) micro-format reader per library shall be on a table 29 inches from the floor.
• assuring that the shelving location for Large Print materials is in an area with illumination of a moderate intensity.
• assuring staircase steps to be of uniform riser height and tread width while eliminating stair nosing projecting more than 1.5 inches.
• timing elevator doors on library premises to remain open at least three seconds.
• maintaining non-slip flooring or low-pile carpet in the elevator.
• installing handrails on rear and side walls of the Central Library elevator 31-33 inches above the floor.
• assuring that the elevator door opening is 36 inches or greater and that floor area of the elevator car is at least 4.5 x 5 feet.
• adapting emergency elevator equipment such as alarms or telephone for use by a wheelchair occupant or person with visual or hearing impairments.
• providing slip-resistant, firm, even, obstacle-free flooring surfaces. If flooring is carpet, then it shall be low-pile, firmly attached and with (or without) an underpad less than .5 inch thick.
• adapting circulation service counters so that corners are rounded and that a portion of the split-level counter is no more than 35 inches from the ground with clear space underneath 30 inches x 20 inches deep x 28 inches high.
• providing one telephone with push button controls and unobstructed head-on and parallel access situated 48 inches or less from the floor in each location where public telephones are installed on library premises. This wheelchair accessible telephone shall also be equipped with an amplification device and hearing aid coupler and shall be clearly identified with the International Symbol of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities and the Hearing Impairment Access symbol.
• providing a telephone book on a counter large enough to hold an open directory and low enough to be used by a person in a wheelchair.
• providing a minimum 10% of total theatre/auditorium/meeting room capacity in spaces for wheelchairs dispersed throughout the seating area with comparable access to exits and line of sight.
• promoting flexible furniture arrangement of the boardroom and other public areas in order to allow for wheelchair movement.
• providing signage that is easy-to-read, glare-free, and in contrasting colours.
• displaying the International Symbol of Accessibility for Persons with Disabilities in accessible service, public and emergency areas containing washrooms, telephones, entrances, exits, elevators and ramps.
• employing tactile symbols for controls on equipment to be used by visually impaired people.
• adapting the emergency warning system for fire or evacuation in order to be effective in alerting hearing and visually impaired patrons. This may mean instituting a system of flashing lights which are activated by audio fire or smoke alarms.

Approved by: Library Board
Date: October 29, 1986
The decision to close the library due to weather conditions is the responsibility of the Director or designate, in consultation with the Board Chair or designate.

Factors to be considered are the forecast of the weather for the rest of the day and the status of other City departments and other public sector institutions.

(See also: Security Manual - Closing a Location - Weather or Other System-Wide Impact)

Approved: Library Board

Date: October, 1991

Revised: March 27, 2002
Statistics [BD-L-2002]

Background:

Vancouver Public Library is a public institution responsible for the efficient use of tax money. Our mission is to enrich the life of every person in our community by providing access to the world's ideas and information. We maintain the finest possible collections, services and technology. We provide caring and expert service supportive of human differences. We promote lifelong learning, the love of reading and exploration of ideas, culture and knowledge in a welcoming, lively atmosphere.

The mission is expressed through goals and objectives developed to meet community needs.

The Library should critically assess the statistics we gather in order to ensure their utility in evaluating our performance.

This evaluation, and any changes, should not be piecemeal so that our statistics cannot be compared over years or even months.

Policy:

1. Statistical information will be collected: to measure the progress towards meeting our goals and objectives; to aid in the development of new goals; to build our collections and develop our services; to monitor the organization and identify areas for improvement; and to facilitate national, regional and international library information gathering (ie: Interlink, CALUPL, PLA). Statistics currently collected, and any changes, will be evaluated against this standard.

2. Our policy is not to measure the output of individuals as part of our statistical collection, but only to measure the activity of units, collections or types of service.

3. Statistics collected cannot measure all Library activity, nor is it appropriate to try to force all activity into statistical categories. Statistics must be supplemented by descriptive information from Library staff and understood within the social context in which it is collected. This activity, like any other, must contribute to our ability to serve our community more effectively and is not an end in itself.

Approved by: Library Board
Date: May 28, 1986
Revised: October 23, 2002
Technology Vision Statement and Public Service Policy

[BD-L-2010]

Background

As part of the VPL Strategic Priorities, and identified as a 2010 activity under the Social Inclusion and Innovation priority to "Develop an integrated service strategy to use technology to enhance public service, create new services to reach patrons and potential patrons, and develop capacity for future online services," staff has developed a Technology Vision Statement to form the basis for developing a technology strategy. The Statement was reviewed at the July Board meeting and at the September Board Executive Committee meeting and the draft brought forward for consideration incorporates Trustee suggestions.

Technology plays a unique role within the public library environment as it provides not only the means to access to traditional library services, tools and services that are new library services, while it is also a key library service to the public, itself. Technology provides the backbone for all library functions while at the same time it makes electronic resources, online community engagement and community building, possible. Statistics show that the virtual branch has been growing in usage since its inception, while database usage, public workstations and public wireless are all heavily used and are basic expectations for library service today. With constantly changing consumer technology and the public's growing expectation for what they can expect from and with the library through technology, leads to the need to develop a strategy to ensure we are capable, nimble and have the capacity to meet changing user expectations.

Statement on Technology and Public Service

Technology plays a unique role in the public library as it provides the means to access library services and content, while it is itself is a key service to the public. Technology provides the backbone for all library operations while at the same time it makes electronic resources, online community engagement and community building possible. It allows us to serve people in the ways that they want to be served, in a secure and lawful environment.

VPL is committed to service innovation through the creative exploration of new technologies:

- We strive to remove barriers to our technology and services.
- We provide access to technology which is essential for full participation in society for those without other means of access.
- We provide guidance and training in technology use to help people find information.
- We consider the needs of all who visit our libraries, whether online or in person.
- We cultivate and support online communities that enrich library services.
- We encourage people to engage with us online as well as in person, taking guidance from requests and suggestions.

Approved by: Library Board

Date: September 22nd, 2010

See also: VPL Digital Strategy (DOC/2014/145607)