



Minutes of Community Engagement Committee

Meeting held Wednesday, December 5, 2016 – 5:00 PM

Loyalist Room, Kingston City Hall

Committee Members Present: Annie Peace-Fast (Chair), Julia Bryan, Jane Neil, Councillor Jim Neill, Claudette Richardson, Monica Stewart; Patricia Enright (Chief Librarian/Chief Executive Officer, ex-officio, non-voting member); Mary Glenn (Recording Secretary)

Regrets: Somnath Sinha

Others Present: Mary Glenn (Recording Secretary); Emma Sobel (Queen's) by invitation

1. Welcome

A. Peace-Fast welcomed all to the meeting.

2. Approval of Agenda

The meeting was called to order at 5:00 PM... A. Peace-Fast made a few revisions to the Public Engagement Spectrum which she would like to discuss under agenda item #6. The agenda was approved.

3. Approval of Minutes of Meeting held November 30, 2016

The minutes of November 30 will be brought forward to the next meeting for approval.

4. Engagement Assessment Tool – evaluate and discuss results of use

5. Discussion of “Connect: A Guide to Ownership Linkages” article re Board-Community linkages

6. Revision of overview document and the “Who” and *Public Engagement Spectrum*

Committee members had been asked to go through the exercise with the Community Engagement process in order to see what changes might be needed. Committee members reviewed their results. It was acknowledged that there would be different results depending on who was completing the exercise i.e. if it were from the point of view of the staff and or that of the community.

M. Stewart misunderstood and applied the exercise to the Code of Conduct policy and came up with a draft vision statement for the Code of Conduct. Committee members commented positively about the draft vision statement and suggested this be kept in mind for when the Code of Conduct policy is reviewed. There was further discussion regarding the assessment tool, and it was acknowledged that there will be times that you may not know there will be political sensitivity.

J. Bryan felt that a couple of things got lost in the most recent version of the Community Assessment Tool Checklist which was condensed to make it easy to use. She would also like to see more descriptive language and details. She suggested we have a more robust framework and believes that sometimes you need to ask the same question 3 or 4 different ways. E. Sobel said that having a more detailed questionnaire will force you to take pause and if you don't know the answer you will go and find out.

Jim Neill suggested that, although this would not apply to every policy, there should be room for it to be broader. For example, when getting staff input staff who work at urban branches will have different issues from staff who work at rural libraries and we need to get that perspective.

J. Bryan sees value in reaching out to different groups and getting more representation. For example, when reviewing the accessibility policy, the Board may want to invite someone to provide that input.

J. Bryan suggested that it would be helpful to have a more detailed and descriptive engagement assessment tool to give more clarity, at least for the first few years it is put into practice. A. Peace-Fast agreed and felt that in the long term we want to make this simple, but having more descriptive language when first putting this into practice would be helpful. The Board can always make revisions when it is up for annual review.

There was lengthy discussion. There may be times that a decision is made because of legislation where we would not ask for input but would still involve engagement. The engagement would not be for decision-making but to inform and for transparency. It was suggested this be clearly stated in the assessment tool. It was also mentioned that this process may provide an opportunity to engage an audience that we haven't successfully engaged before.

We want to make sure we throw out a wider net. For example, regarding the Code of Conduct, we heard from people who use the library but we also want to hear from people who may not come to the library because they feel threatened and have had an unfortunate experience. We always have to look at the balance.

Committee members felt that the need to always be looking at the complex ownership and providing examples is well spelled out in the linkages. Because we want this to be part of the culture of this Board, the committee suggested that some of the language be included in the document in the preamble, together with the Ends statement.

The committee reviewed the list of 11 questions from the earlier document and agreed to put some of the questions and more detail back in to the Engagement Assessment Tool. The revised document will be brought to the next meeting.

It was pointed out that it is up to staff and not the board to determine initiatives such as programs. However, something that would affect the entire system such as library openings and closings would involve the Board. There should be a mechanism for issues to find a way up to the Board so the Board is aware.

Jane Neil believes that there will be two areas: Operations, and the Board; and it will need to be determined which it is. In addition, the Board has to get into the culture of ownership and being out there.

It was reported that under the Carver governance model: *With respect to providing information and counsel to the Board, the Chief Librarian may not permit the Board to be uninformed.* Currently, the CEO reports on a monthly basis (Communication and Counsel report).

J. Bryan said that what we want to do is codify essentially what is best practice and allow the CEO to do her job as long as it is within the Limitations and meets the Ends.

P. Enright reported that the library has been doing things to get input from the public. For example, when we redesigned our website we conducted user studies and had people test it. However, she believes it's important to codify the process.

There was discussion on how the response matrix works in at the end and at what level things should go to the CEO and not involve the Board.

Jim Neill suggested the CEO continue to do what she has been doing in terms of bringing policies to the board as scheduled for review, but with an additional paragraph to state that the matrix was applied to the policy recognizing that we now have a policy.

It was suggested that the titles and names in the *Public Engagement Spectrum* document be revised to make the language more library-specific and to state whether it will be a Board responsibility. Everything high impact would go to the Board, but then there will be a question of which other policies would go to the Board. There was the example given of the needle disposals which were installed, and although consultation was not required (because of health and safety concerns and legislation) the Board needed to be made aware. J. Bryan, who drafted this document together with E. Sobel, is concerned that the engagement

level assignments listed on the spectrum document may not work and suggested the Committee consider this.

The process will evolve as staff use it, and community members on the committee said that there will still be times that there will be surprises. Jane Neil said that you become trusting of the process.

It was acknowledged that the library is a complex space. There is a diverse group of library users and the library serves different people. Most often it is the same group of people who go to public meetings and speak. We need to find a way to engage people who may not come to public meetings, and need to provide an opportunity for public feedback from those not comfortable speaking at public meetings.

Jane Neil felt that the Board Ownership Linkages is pro-active but what is missing is a plan for linkages. M. Stewart agreed and would like to see the Board work on a plan for linkages so there is ongoing engagement of the ownership, not only to address a particular issue but in general to build trust.

As requested, M. Stewart will prepare a draft preamble for the policy to include Ownership Linkages and the Ends.

It will be recommended that the Board come up with a linkages plan, which is the responsibility of the Board and not this committee.

The remaining items on the agenda will be discussed at the next meeting.

7. Motions relating to any of the above

8. Next Steps

9. Other Business: KFPL Board Carver Governance Model 2015-2018

10. Adjournment

It was moved by Jim Neill to adjourn at 6:30 PM

11. Next Meeting

Wednesday, January 18, 2017 at 5 PM (waiting for confirmation regarding location)