

DATE: December 13, 2023

TO: MAYOR AND COUNCIL

NAME AND TITLE: Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

SUBJECT: Prince George Public Library Permission Request

ATTACHMENT(S): Prince George Public Library letter dated December 4, 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. That Council grant approval to the Prince George Public Library to enter into a written agreement to cooperate in the provision of library services with the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George specifically for the appointment of one (1) member to the library board as permitted by section 48 of the *BC Library Act*.
2. That Council grant approval to the Prince George Public Library to enter into a written agreement to cooperate in the provision of library services with the Lheidli T'enneh First Nation specifically for the appointment of one (1) member to the library board as permitted by section 48 of the *BC Library Act*.

PURPOSE:

This report is offered to help address the attached correspondence from the Prince George Public Library and communicate endorsement from the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs.

BACKGROUND:

Correspondence from the Prince George Public Library was shared through the Library Board Council Liaison to the Intergovernmental Affairs Committee on December 11th for consideration.

The correspondence requests permission for the library board to enter into an agreement with the Regional District of Fraser Fort George and the Lheidli Tenneh First Nation for the provision of a library service, specifically to be able to appoint a representative from these orders of government to the library board.

The relevant legislation, the *BC Library Act*, allows for these actions to take place so long as the municipality that created the library board agrees. Where a municipal council may wish to extend membership on a municipal library board beyond the appointment parameters directed in Part 2

Municipal Libraries, Section 5 of the Library Act, provisions are available under Part 5, Section 48. Full text of the Act is available at: [Library Act \(gov.bc.ca\)](http://www.gov.bc.ca/library-act). An excerpt follows, highlighting has been added for clarity.

Agreements

48 (1) Subject to subsection (2), a library board may enter into a written agreement to cooperate in the provision of library services with one or more of the following:

- (a) another library board;
- (b) a municipality;
- (c) a regional district;
- (d) an aboriginal government;
- (e) a board of school trustees;
- (e.1) a francophone education authority as defined in the [School Act](#);
- (f) an institution under the [College and Institute Act](#);
- (g) the board of governors of a university;
- (h) the minister;
- (i) a prescribed body.

(2) Before entering into an agreement under subsection (1), the library board of a municipal library must obtain the approval of the municipality that established the municipal library.

(3) An agreement under this section may provide as follows:

- (a) for the appointment of one or more members to the library board of a municipal library by a municipality, regional district or aboriginal government that enters into the agreement with that library board;
- (b) for the appointment of one or more members to the library board of a public library association by an aboriginal government that enters into the agreement with that library board.

(4) Members appointed by agreement under this section are additional to those appointed to the library board under any other provision of this Act and members appointed under this section may vote at meetings of the library board.

(5) An agreement under this section must be consistent with this Act and the regulations.

(6) A library board may spend money available from its budget for the purposes of an agreement under this section.

It is important to note that approval of this request would see the Prince George Public Library Board grow from 8 appointees and a Council representative to 10 appointees and a council representative. Currently the board is comprised of a member of municipal council and eight other electors or residents of the City

of Prince George, not being members of Prince George City Council or employees of the City. Eight members are appointed for two-year terms and are eligible for re-appointment. No person may be appointed for more than eight consecutive years.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:

It is assessed that supporting the Library Boards request helps the City of Prince George advance its strategic pillar, City Government, and Infrastructure Priorities. Specifically, the subheading, focus on meaningful communication and relationship development to advance shared priorities.

FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS:

None. Financial considerations related to the expansion of the Library Board are external to the City.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION:

Should approval be granted the Prince George Public Library Board will grow from 8 to 10 appointment members with a council appointee making the full board 11. As the board remains comprised of an uneven number the ability to break ties remains.

Allowing for this expansion appears to support the goals defined in the tripartite memorandum of understanding between the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George, City of Prince George, and Lheidli T'enneh First Nation. Specifically, developing service agreements that are mutually beneficial and collaborating on decision making and establishing cooperative action plans to further shared initiatives.

At its December 11, 2023, meeting, the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs has provided the following recommendation:

“That the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs RECOMMENDS that Council approve that the Prince George Public Library Board entering into an agreement with the Lheidli T’enneh First Nation and the Regional District of Fraser-Fort George with the provision of a seat being allocated for appointment by those organizations on the Prince George Public Library Board.”

RESPECTFULLY SUBMITTED:

Garth Frizzell, Chair, Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs

Prepared: Eric Depenau, Manager, Intergovernmental Relations

APPROVED:

Walter Babicz, City Manager

Meeting Date: 2024/01/08