

## Change to BCLTA Voting Protocol

WHEREAS for the purposes of voting at Special and Annual General Meetings the British Columbia Library Trustees' Association (BCLTA) currently allocates one vote to each individual library trustee and one vote to each institution;

AND WHEREAS a voting formula that is based on the population served by each institution and which ensures a proper balance between the potentially differing interests of large and small libraries would more accurately reflect the will of the full membership of the Association:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Part 2 Section 3 of the BCLTA Bylaws be amended to read:

3. There shall be four (4) classes of Membership, namely: Institutional, Individual, Honourary/Life, and Associate.

a. Institutional – membership is available to a Board of any public library recognized by the BRITISH COLUMBIA LIBRARY TRUSTEES ASSOCIATION and any public library system as defined under the British Columbia Library Act. Institutional Members shall not vote at Special and General Meetings.

b. Individual – Institutional Members serving a population of less than 50,000 will appoint one (1) Individual Member. Institutional Members serving a population of greater than or equal to 50,000 will appoint a number of Individual Members as determined by the following formula:

*Number of Individual Members = (Number of Public Libraries serving populations of less than 50,000) divided by (Number of Public Libraries serving populations greater than or equal to 50,000) rounded to the nearest integer number – according to population statistics taken from the most recent edition of British Columbia Public Libraries Statistics.*

Individual Members shall each have one vote at Special and General Meetings.

c. Honourary/Life – persons in British Columbia who have shown distinguished merit in the library field, or persons in British Columbia who have contributed to the development of library service and are appointed by the Board. Such member, when recognized by the Chair may speak at Special and General Meetings, but may neither hold office nor vote in the Association.

d. Associate – may be granted to a library system or person who has deep interest in libraries. Such member, when recognized by the chair, may speak at Special and General Meetings but may neither hold office nor vote in the Association.

AND BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that corresponding changes to the BCLTA Bylaws be made as follows:

- Part 2 Section 8 addressing Individual Member Rights and Privileges be eliminated.
- Part 4 Section 21, addressing Voting of Members, be eliminated.
- A new Part 5 Section 22 be created to read as follows: Any trustee serving on the Board of any Institutional Member may be elected to the Board of the Society.
- Part 5, Section 26 be amended to read: The Board may at any time, and from time to time, appoint a trustee who is currently serving on the Board of an Institutional Member to fill a vacancy on the Board.

- a) If a Director resigns office, or otherwise ceases to hold office, the remaining Directors may appoint a trustee who is currently serving on the Board of an Institutional Member to take the place of the former Director.
- b) A Director may be removed for cause from office by a special resolution, requiring a favourable  $\frac{3}{4}$  majority at a General Meeting, and a trustee who is currently serving on the Board of an Institutional Member may be appointed by the Members to serve during the balance of the term.
- Part 15 Section 50(c) be amended to read: In all cases, where the votes of the representatives then present are equal, for and against a question, the resolution shall be defeated, and it shall be the duty of the Chair to so declare.
- Part 19 Section 54(a) be amended to read: The President or Chair shall enforce observance of these Bylaws, or in the case of procedural matters not dealt with by these Bylaws, the rules and principle of parliamentary procedures, as stated by the latest edition of Roberts Rules of Order shall govern. Subject to an appeal to the meeting sustained by a majority vote of the individual members present, the President or Chair shall have the right to decide all questions of order, and his rulings shall be final.

#### **Comments:**

Under the proposed formula, and according to the 2006 edition of *British Columbia Public Libraries Statistics*, the 14 libraries in BC that are currently serving populations of more than 50,000 would be allocated four votes each. This would give them the same voting power as the 56 institutions serving populations of less than 50,000, thus ensuring that neither the smaller libraries nor the larger libraries could, as a group, unduly influence the will of the Association. The formula would ensure that the number of votes allocated to the larger libraries would always maintain this 50/50 balance.

The number of votes allocated to each of the larger institutions would vary according to yearly membership in the Association, which is dependent upon payment of annual membership dues. For example, in 2007, 12 of the 14 larger libraries and all 56 of the smaller libraries have paid their BCLTA dues. This would result in 5 votes being allocated to each of the 12 larger libraries in 2007 ( $56 / 12 = 4.6$  – rounded to the nearest integer = 5).

The current voting formula employed by BCLTA at Special and Annual General Meetings gives added influence to institutions with large library boards, since each individual trustee is allocated a vote in addition to the overall institutional vote. For example, the Vancouver Island Regional Library (VIRL) has 38 votes under the current system – one for each of its 37 board members and one for the institution itself. Under the new formula (and calculating according to 100% membership in the Association), VIRL would have a total of four votes, bringing it in line with institutions such as the Vancouver Public Library, which serves a 20% larger population but has only 13 board members and thus a third less voting power. In addition, the combined eight votes of these two institutions, which together serve nearly a million people, would be matched by the votes of eight smaller institutions from around the province – ensuring that each type of library (small/large, urban/rural) has a voice in the affairs of the Association.

In the past, BCLTA employed a weighted voting formula based on percentage of dues contributed by each institution to the Association – a formula which doesn't acknowledge that each institution contributes a fair percentage of its annual operating expenditures and should be enfranchised accordingly. The amount contributed by a smaller library to BCLTA may appear small in comparison with the amount contributed by a larger library, but as a percentage of annual operating expenditures the amounts are representative. And in fact, the maximum contribution to BCLTA is in fact a very small percentage of the operating budgets of the very large libraries.

It is hoped that the proposed voting formula will provide balance and ensure that each type and size of library has a fair voice in determining the policies, directions and activities of the Association. By taking population served as the measure of voting power, it is hoped that this will ensure fair representation of the public via the library boards that represent their interests around the province. It should also be noted that proxy voting is permitted under the BCLTA Constitution, thus ensuring that remote libraries which are unable to send a representative to Special and Annual General Meetings of the Association can nevertheless ensure that their single or multiple vote is counted.

*(Please Note: a chart depicting the bylaw changes specified in the resolution is also attached for information.)*