

January 23, 2009

January Update on BCLTA Board Activities

A meeting of the BCLTA Executive was held on Saturday, January 17. Highlights of this meeting and of recent BCLTA Board activities follow.

BCLTA Board Meeting/Activity Highlights:

Following a restful holiday season, your BCLTA board and staff are back at work and busier than ever. Just before Christmas a bulletin went out encouraging library boards to contact the provincial government to communicate the importance of maintaining (and increasing) **library funding during times of economic trouble**. A letter from BCLTA President Andy Ackerman to the Premier was attached as an example, and we have since been copied on several letters to the Province. If you haven't yet written the Premier, we would strongly encourage you to do so. Belt-tightening is inevitable in the current economic climate, and we need to ensure that government support for libraries corresponds with the increased usage we are seeing.

Early in the New Year, your board completed work on ***Library 101: A Primer for Local Governments***. This resource was conveyed to library boards directly, and is also available for download from the BCLTA website at www.bclta.org under the "Advocacy" tab. We encourage you to use this resource to communicate the importance of BC's libraries to local elected officials and staff. A shortened form of the Primer will be included in the Local Government Leadership Academy's Newly Elected Official seminar binders, and we have also used some of the content to enhance the Library Board section of the Union of BC Municipalities' Fact Sheets. BCLTA will be reaching out to elected officials in person through our onsite presence at several of the upcoming Newly Elected Official seminars.

BCLTA is working with a sub-committee of the BC Library Association to investigate the potential implications of the **BC-Alberta Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement** on public libraries. BCLTA commissioned a report on TILMA this past fall, and we are now seeking a legal opinion and looking at possible next steps. Contact has been made with our Alberta counterparts and they have been invited to participate in this process.

Stay tuned for a **Library Act Review survey** to be distributed to member library boards by the end of the month. BCLTA will be preparing a brief for submission to the Public Library Services Branch based on member feedback – and we are encouraging individual boards to submit their own briefs as well. This is a rare opportunity to contribute to legislative change and it is extremely important that government hears from the trustee community.

Proposed changes to the BCLTA Constitution & Bylaws have now been circulated and we await member feedback prior to introducing a special resolution to be considered at the 2009 AGM. Of particular importance is the potential increase in membership dues – please read this bulletin carefully and convey your individual or board comments to your regional board contact or BCLTA's Executive Director.

Also keep an eye out for BCLTA's **Call for Resolutions** to be considered at the 2009 AGM. If your board has an issue or concern you feel deserves the attention of the full BCLTA membership, consider passing

a resolution at an upcoming board meeting and submitting it to your Executive. Specific guidelines and details to come.

You may have noticed some changes to the **BCLTA website** (www.bclta.org) over the past few months. Staff have been gradually reviewing and updating the site as part of 2008/09 Strategic Priority #4, which is to improve BCLTA operations. Look for continued updates in the months ahead – and feel free to provide your suggestions and comments on the website to Errin Morrison at execdirector@bclta.org.

And speaking of websites...BCLTA members can look forward to the introduction of a new online meeting place for the BC library community in the coming months. We are working in partnership with the BC Library Association, the BC Teacher Librarians' Association, and the Public Library Services Branch to create "**WebJunction BC**" – an online presence for all our members which will feature distance learning opportunities, social networking tools, reference materials, and news of interest to trustees and library practitioners throughout the province. We hope to launch this spring... and in the meantime, we invite you to learn more at www.webjunction.org.

Any questions or concerns about the foregoing can be directed to BCLTA's Executive Director, Errin Morrison, at execdirector@bclta.org.