PROVINCIAL PUBLIC LIBRARY GRANT REPORT 2020

Rossland Public Library

INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1939, just after the declaration of war, the Rossland Public Library was a demonstration of hope. Currently, the library serves a population of 3,729, according to the 2016 census. 13% of our population speak French and there is both a French language elementary school and a late French immersion programme in the public school. 19% of our population is under 15 and roughly the same number are retired.

According to the 2016 census, the median income is approximately $7,000 more than the province as a whole. 10% of Rosslanders identified themselves as self-employed in 2016, but many residents work at Teck Resources in Trail or are professionals working in Rossland and local communities (Trail, Castlegar & Nelson). There is winter work at Red Mountain Resort and there are also a few people who telecommute or make Rossland their base while working in jobs that involve a lot of travel.

Many people make the library part of their daily errands – grocery store, post office, library. The library is also the only building on the main street with a front lawn and often the site for many a picnic.

Our current strategic plan runs 2019-21. Our goals are:
1. to inspire the curious
2. maintain organizational strength
3. provide inspiring and useful technology
4. continue sharing resources and collaborating with partners
5. create and maintain welcoming spaces

PROVINCIAL PRIORITIES

Priority 1 - Improving access for British Columbians

We have increased our ebooks and eaudiobook collection as well as assigning someone to work with our print disabled patrons. While our public computers are currently unavailable, we have one for those needing print documents. Our wi-fi is available 24/7 and reaches to the space in front of the library.

Priority 2 – Building Capactiy

Our staff are taking advantage of a great many online learning opportunities to increase their ability to do their work and learn new skills which will help us better serve the community. We have been able to increase the number of staff working at one time, giving much better service to our community.

Priority 3 – Enhancing Citizen Engagement
The Library partners with the City of Rossland to spread information about City initiatives. The City is working on a new Official Community Plan with information available at the library. The library has all the council meeting packages available for those who need them.

Priority 4 - Enhancing Governance
The Rossland Public Library Association elected a substantially new board of trustees in 2020. A new process of application and descriptive job descriptions ensured a high standard of applicant. All trustees have signed agreements as to their duties and many have attended training provided by BCLTA. Work continues updating and, in some cases, substantially re-writing policies.

ADDITIONAL REPORTING FOR 2020
Technology Grant – Final Report
1. Upgrades to patron and staff software have made things run much more smoothly. With the new version of Microsoft Office replacing a very, very old version staff are finding it much easier to do their work. Unfortunately, as our public access computers are not up and running, we have been unable to gauge the effect on the public.
2. Two Kobo ereaders were purchased and loaded with a variety of titles. They weren't available to borrow until into January but both have been out. One of the borrowers said she had lost her reading "mojo" and the variety of genres and authors helped her get it back. Still to come are lendable iPads.
3. We added books to our Overdrive Advantage account generally choosing titles with long wait lists. As our e-circulation has gone up 25% monthly year over year, I fear this is just a drop in the bucket and we will be looking for more funds to build this collection.
4. A single Acorn TV token is available to Rosslanders. No one may borrow it more than once per month. It is always out.
5. Subscription to Novelist. Libraries constantly receive requests for book recommendations and this is another discovery tool for our community. It assists the librarians put together theme-based bags of books for patrons, a new programme which is a big hit with people.
6. Upcoming: money has been set aside to work with the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy in providing in-person tech help when we are able to offer that.

COVID-19 AND PUBLIC LIBRARIES

The library was closed for two months and COVID procedure documents were written. One staff person chose to be laid off for three months but the rest kept working, some from home and some in the library. When we reopened in June with limited hours for browsing and borrowing, the community was happy. When inter-library loans returned in August, they were ecstatic.

The offerings of Tumblebooks, etc though the BC Libraries Coop were greatly appreciated by the community and a number of people took advantage of our Gale Courses subscription to learn something new. A *Staying In* list of online things to do at home was developed and included story reading, crafts, virtual visits to museums, etc.

Rossland is a Resort Municipality and, as others under this designation have found, we are still getting visitors. As such, we have been very cautious when allowing people in the building. We are still not back to our pre-pandemic hours of operation and have no seating or public access computers. While printing from devices is possible, we have a single computer available for those who need to print and we are offering exam invigilation.

SUMMARY

I don't think anyone at the library thought they would deal with a year like 2020 in their working lives. Even with a vaccine rolling out, we are not expecting to return to "normal" operations anytime soon. This will be a long haul and things will always be a little different.

Our library has always been a vibrant place, with 50,000 visitors a year, hanging out, meeting friends, studying, holding meetings but this year it seems empty. However, the forced moved to online meetings has meant a better connection between library directors within our region and within the province. Libraries are creating a larger online presence and we will work to build capacity to create virtual offerings.

People are borrowing materials at a rate equal to pre-pandemic and our inter-library loan department is as busy as ever. Including materials, postage and wages, the service costs almost $50,000 a year - twice the total of the all provincial grants received. This is a vital service in small towns if all British Columbians are going to have equal access to materials.

The main street of Rossland, where the library is located is lucky to have access to fibre optic broadband. However, with tightening budgets, libraries, especially small libraries struggle to provide online resources as license fees for digital books, magazines, video, learning platforms and more are often out of reach.

With 2021 shaping up to be as uncertain as 2020, we continue to do what we can and to offer what services we can in a safe manner.

2020 Library Technology Grant

Rossland Public Library

Upgrading software and hardware

The most pressing need was to update the 10-year-old office suite used by staff and patrons.

The staff laptops are seven years old and updating them now seemed prudent, before any major issues arose. The old ones have had minor issues and will be gone over by our IT person and refurbished for lending to the public.

Both of these projects are forward looking, giving staff and patrons functioning technology for the next five to ten years.

The public access computers are heavily used and to ensure equitable usage and lessen tensions between patrons and staff, management software will be installed.

Electronic Collections

There has been a steady increase in ebook usage and many times when the book the patron wanted was only available via ebook. By repurposing two iPads and purchasing ereaders, patrons will have the opportunity to borrow ebooks even if they don't own a device to read them on. We will also be adding to our Overdrive Advantage account, shortening wait times and building a local authors collection.

Novelist is a well-priced discovery tool, enable patrons to find their next favourite book with or without staff help.

Acorn-TV offers patrons a streaming TV service where they not have access to other, pricier forms of video.

Digital Learning

The Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy offers tech help drop-in sessions as their budget allows. With the additional money, we will be able to double the number of these session. There will also be a staff training component, building staff capacity to assist our patrons with their questions.

2020 LIBRARY TECHNOLOGY GRANT REPORTING FORM: ROSSLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

Total Technology Grant Amount: 9,740

Area of Need	Outcome	Metrics	Strategic Links	Actions	Collaborative Links	Timeframe	Project Budget	In-Kind/Leveraged funds	Comments
Patron hardware upgrades (public computers, printers, etc.) **Lendable devices**	Reduce barriers to digital inclusion	Increased ebook usage.		Purchase ereaders. Purchase cases, etc to make ereaders & currently owned iPads lendable.		End of 2020	1,000		
Patron software upgrades **Upgrade office suite**	Users have functioning, up-to-date software.	Upgrade office suite on 10 computers		Purchase software. IT install		Summer 2020	600		
Staff hardware upgrades **Update staff laptops & make old ones lendable**	Staff have functioning hardware for next 7 - 10 years. Lendable laptops reduce barriers to digital inclusion.			Reasearch and purchase laptops. Make old laptops lendable.		Autumn 2020	3,700		
Electronic collections (licensing) **Novelist**	Provide patrons and staff with a discovery tool.			Two years of Novelist		2020 - 21	200		
Electronic collections (licensing) **Acorn TV**	Provide patrons with access to a video service.	All tokens used.		Two years of Acorn-TV		2020-21	600		
Electronic collections (licensing) **Add books to Overdrive Advantage account**	Collection suited to local readers.	Shorter wait times for popular items		Collection development plan. Purchase books		2020-21	1,000		
Digital programming **Tech Drop-in help**	Patrons have access to help and feel more confident using technology	At least 10 sessions provided by CBAL staff		Plan times in conjunction with CBAL		2021	840	Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy.	

| Patron software upgrades

Software to manage public computer use. | Equitable useage of technology. | Three computers will have software installed | | Research, purchase and install software. | | Autumn/Winter 2020 | 1800 | | |