Provincial Grant Report 2018

MARCH 1, 2019

Hudson’s Hope Public Library
Community Hub

The Hudson’s Hope Public Library is located in a small community within a very large municipal district. Our library is fortunate to have a very generous municipality that has provided us with a building specifically built to be our library, which highlights the pioneer origins of the community in its magnificent log structure overlooking the Peace River.

Many of our local facilities are open seasonally including the Curling Rink, Ice Arena and Outdoor Pool. Our central location, superb programs for children and youth as well as our amazing library team keep us recognized as a community hub all year round.

Local Industry

The main employer in our community is BC Hydro at the W.A.C. Bennett and Peace Canyon dams. These two dams supply the majority of the energy produced by BC Hydro in the Northern Region. The two dams located in the District of Hudson’s Hope provided 94.9% of the BC Hydro supply of energy in the Northern Region in 2018. The Northern Region makes up approximately 2/3 of the land mass of British Columbia. When compared with the entire province of BC and its BC Hydro energy production, we make 27% of the provincial energy supply here in the District of Hudson’s Hope. (https://www.bchydro.com/community/in_your_region.html#reports)

Three years ago, construction started on the Cite C dam and hydroelectric generating station with a projected completion for 2024, according to the BC Hydro Northern Region Annual Report for 2018. This project, as well as an upturn with other natural resource companies, is resulting in a significant increase in traffic going through Hudson’s Hope. Our local food providers and gas retailers are noticing higher sales from the increase in traffic but it is not influencing our daytime patron flow. This is likely because the main worker demographic is not one that would usually take advantage of library services, young to middle age adult males who are single or working away from their families.
Challenges and Celebrations

In 2018, our concern that we had pertaining to the increasing need to assist patrons with Service Canada requests was addressed. We started discussions to see what our library might need in terms of support from these agencies. In 2019, a representative from each organization will be visiting our library to help with patron inquiries and they are offering training sessions with library staff to increase familiarity with services available to the public.

In 2018, we signed a Service Agreement with the District of Hudson’s Hope (DoHH). This new agreement should decrease the amount of budget work for both the municipal staff as well as the Library Board and Library Director, as the budget allocation from DoHH was approved at a 1% increase over 3 years. The Library Board hopes that this agreement will help to open up communication channels when meeting annually to review the agreement and upon negotiating a follow up agreement.

For our 2018 budget, the Board approved a grant goal to be included in the budget, which decreased the amount of work from the previous year when we were increasing budget lines as funds arrived. In 2018, we assumed that the grant goal would be reached and if we were not able to reach the grant goal, the Board was willing to support the budget from our reserve accounts. This provided operations with steady budget lines and enabled staff to work consistent hours throughout the year.

The following demonstrates the generous support ($1000 or over) that we received in 2018 and how the funds were directed:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Donor</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Direction for funds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GO Grant</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>Operations: Program Support, 2018/2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pembina</td>
<td>$5000</td>
<td>YA Section Upgrade &amp; Program Support, use in 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Families First</td>
<td>$3700</td>
<td>Early Learning &amp; Community Partnership, 2018/2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AgriSpirit</td>
<td>$15000</td>
<td>Library Furniture Upgrade, use in 2019</td>
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</tbody>
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Demographics

The following chart illustrates population trends for the District of Hudson’s Hope through enrollment numbers of the school at the beginning of each school year. The Hudson’s Hope school has displayed a decrease in enrollment again in the 2018/19 year, which is still 18.1% higher than the population dip indicated for the 2013/2014 school year and 14.9% lower than peak enrollment in the 2010/11 school year.

The table below indicates how many school aged children attended our programs each year. The similarity in the distribution of our program attendance compared to school enrollment displays a direct correlation between the attendances of our programs with how many children are enrolled in the public school. Increases in attendance after 2015 are due to STEAM initiatives and the addition of young adult programs.
Strategic Plan

We updated our Strategic Plan in 2018 and the new format lends very well to having a complimentary Operational Plan to solidify the operational and governance structures of our board and staff. We have upgraded our plan to include five strategic areas including Customer Experience, Community Engagement, Library Atmosphere, Board & Employee Experience and Sustainability.

**Mission:** “We are a welcoming hub that helps people grow without limits by providing free access to a rich array of the world’s stories, ideas and information.”

**Vision:** “Our library promotes and encourages lifelong learning in our community.”

The first goal in our strategic plan is Customer Experience. In 2018, we obtained $13,700 in operational grants to support programming. We started a new collaboration with the District of Hudson’s Hope (DoHH) Events Coordinator to provide Pro-D Day Culture Camps, where DoHH provides the morning portion and the Library facilitates the afternoon portion. For each camp, we focus on a new location; past camps have included Inuvik, Iceland, New Zealand and more.

We have obtained a Families First grant, which resulted in us facilitating community collaborations within early learning businesses and organizations throughout the year and we plan to purchase a toy library to provide cognitive development toys for babies.

The Board has also supported an annual capital allocation toward a technology upgrade reserve to ensure that we are providing up to date technology to meet the ever-changing needs our patrons.

To improve in the area of Community Engagement, we have been having staff train in advertising platforms such as “Canva” for engagements that are more eye-catching as well as obtaining feedback directly from patrons and board regarding advertising initiatives. We hope to provide more consistent cross advertising in print, email, social media and in-house methods. Our pending Operational Plan for 2019 will allow more
insight to board. Community collaborations have proven very successful with DoHH. The Events Coordinator provides a physical component to our Summer Reading Club (SRC) and Culture Camps. Collaboration with school was initiated, but we hit a barrier with ongoing staffing turnover in 2018.

We plan to improve the *Library Atmosphere* to solidify our role as a community hub in our town. Our Reading Room will be upgraded to be a multi-use room with modular furniture elements and we will update patron-seating areas throughout the rest of the library as well. All needed funds for planned projects have been received and the Young Adult section is scheduled for upgrade early in 2019 and the remainder should be completed by the end of 2020. Once the furniture upgrades are complete, we plan to conduct a use analysis of our library space to ensure that we are fully meeting the needs of the community. DoHH has added our building to their monthly safety checks. This should result in some long time service issues being repaired or upgraded in our facility, which, had not been addressed due to Public Works management turnover.

Focusing on *Board & Employee Experience* ensures that our organization is both positive and promotes innovation and progress. Staff did not attend conferences in 2018 but were instead engaged with free and paid education opportunities including Project Management through Royal Roads University, Collection Development through InfoPeople and improving skills in Microsoft Excel via Gale courses.

We have made great progress in our goal of *Sustainability* by signing a service agreement with DoHH. As of January 2019, there is no anticipated change to budget procedure or methods of communications with DoHH compared to previous years, although this was the intention of the board when developing the new agreement.

DoHH has secured a 1% annual increase, which provides much needed financial stability but this does not meet inflation so it is up to association fundraising to meet increases in the budget. Calculated at an average of .7% per year (assuming 1.7% inflation), means that HHPL would need to supplement the annual budget at an ever increasing rate to avoid making staff cuts. This would calculate out to $3700 in 5 years and $7900 after 10 years to maintain the current level of services.

We are consistently improving on both operations and governance to improve clarity of roles and reporting. Our new Strategic plan will lend well to providing a concrete base that will allow our organization to excel.
LIBRARY PRIORITY 1: Fostering Equitable Access to Information & Services

Through our strategic initiative to enhance Customer Experience, we have been able to contribute in three main areas to foster equitable access.

Firstly, we subscribe to a group subscription to the Gale learning platform, through the NELF and NCLF agreement. This allows staff and patrons the access to courses that provide continuing adult education to enrich life experience and allow career advancement. Staff have been able to improve foundations in Microsoft Excel for better statistics tracking and reporting. One patron specific outcome involved one patron being able to take courses that allowed her to be more proficient in computer skills and other job specific training and is now working as a medical receptionist after being a stay-at-home mom for a number of years.

Last year, our Young Adult Programmer also joined the Overdrive collection development team and her selections have had province wide impacts as circulations have increased substantially within her budgeted area. She feels that circulations may be improving because more women are starting to read young adult materials due to the lighter content and lower time commitment.

Our library has also continued management of the book club set collection, which is shared by the KLF, NELF, NCLF, NWLF and IslandLink. Circulations within this collection have increased substantially since the inception of the project. This program allows patrons ease of access to new titles of popular book club titles, as many libraries have policies in place that do not allow new items to circulate to other libraries on interlibrary loan during the first year in their library collections. On average, approximately a third of the book club set collection is in circulation at any given time.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 2: Developing Skills & Knowledge

Through our strategic initiative of improving Board and Employee Experience, we have been able to promote a number of learning opportunities within our organization. We were able to send a number of Board members to TOP training last year, which is supported by NorthEast Library Federation (NELF) funding. This training session helped enhance role clarity, and illustrated to the attending trustees how to work in a cooperative relationship with the Library Director to enhance functionality of the
association. TOP training provides new clarity to governance and operational boundaries. In 2018, we provided feedback to BCLTA that helped initiate the process of revamping the TOP manual that will be introduced in 2019.

NELF, once again, spearheaded an initiative in collaboration with the province and Royal Roads University to provide a series of courses to enhance library leadership. The Library Director was able to take advantage of the project management course, which supported prior learning and will allow for streamlining of operational projects in the future.

In the past, NELF also organized another leadership course that the Library Director took advantage of pertaining to Strategic Planning. This course allowed the association to compile the new strategic plan for the library after a number of sessions, one of which was moderated by a volunteer from a local professional organization. As compared to the last strategic plan, this new method allowed for a substantial savings in writer and facilitator fees. The new format of the strategic plan also allows a complimentary operational plan to be compiled to supply additional clarity of how the areas of strategic focus are actioned within operations.

In 2016, we joined the 1000 Books Before Kindergarten initiative. We have had great success in this program and have quite a number of children on our “Reading Train”. We have even had a mother from Prince George sign up to do our program as she has friends from here who are engaged in the program as well. Since starting this reading promotion just over two years ago, we have already had 3 children complete the program and quite a few have passed the half way point and are in the home stretch. Although there are some BC libraries engaging in this or similar programming, we are the only library in BC listed on the official program website.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 3: Working Together

Another strategic objective is to Facilitate Community Connections within the overarching goal of Community Engagement. We have participated in a number of community collaborations over the past year. In June, we hosted a program wind-up barbecue that we opened up to the community to promote programs and services to our community members. We collaborated with the District of Hudson’s Hope’s Event
Coordinator to provide active games for the party and the Fire Department was able to provide barbecues and cooks for the event.

Throughout the summer, we also collaborated with the DoHH Event Coordinator to provide an active component to our Summer Reading Clubs. She was able to come two times a week and engaged our SRC attendees in active games for a half hour at the end of each club session.

In the fall, we continued to collaborate with the Events Coordinator to provide Culture Camps on specific Non-Instructional School days. She provided activities for the morning session while our library provided a presentation, stories, games and crafts all circulating around one cultural theme. So far, we have focused on cultures of the Inuit, Spain and New Zealand. In 2019, we will tackle Hawaii, China, Iceland and Mexico.

Our library is also managing the Families First grant for our community. This grant is facilitating a number of community collaboration events and opportunities including mom & tot exercise classes, yoga in the park, Family Day events and a baby toy library. Unfortunately, this fund has been discontinued and will no longer help facilitate these collaborations. We hope that the committee will carry on and find the resources necessary to continue with early learning community collaborations.

LIBRARY PRIORITY 4: Enhancing Governance

The strategic goals of Sustainability as well as Board and Employee Experience both lend well to the provincial Enhancing Governance initiative. In 2018, we were able to negotiate and sign a Service Agreement with the District of Hudson’s Hope. This agreement provides financial stability and will support the library with a 1% increase annually. The board hopes that this new step will improve communication between the association and municipality in future years.
Summary

Hudson’s Hope Public Library supports *Equitable Access* through supporting consortia purchasing through group licensing opportunities such as our Sitka Evergreen integrated library system, Gale online learning platform, as well as Overdrive and RBDigital for electronic audiobooks and books. We also participate in provincial initiatives such as management of a book club set collection that has over 130 titles as well as providing time for our Young Adult Programmer to participate in collection development for Overdrive.

We provide support for *Developing Skills and Knowledge* by participating in educational opportunities from Gale, InfoPeople, Royal Roads University and TOP training.

The *Working Together* initiative is demonstrated in our community collaboration initiatives that are providing early learning opportunities, reading support and educational support through our non-instructional day camps.

We strive towards *Enhancing Governance* through actions that have resulted in signing a Service Agreement with our municipal government as well as our board has focused a lot of time to amend policies and procedures to ensure there is a positive relationship between the board and staff of the library. Our challenge moving forward is finding financial stability through our fundraising initiatives and the ongoing challenge of constructive communication with our municipal council.

We feel fully engaged with our strategic focus on *Sustainability, Library Atmosphere, Community Engagement, Customer, Board & Employee Experience*. We are inspired and motivated to make our library the best that it can possibly be for our community.