



AGENDA

Greater Victoria Public Library Board Board of Trustees Regular Meeting

Date: Tuesday, September 16, 2025

Time: 12:00-1:00 PM

Location: In Person: Community Room, Central Branch, 735 Broughton Street, Victoria, BC
Electronically: Microsoft Teams

1. Call to Order

2. Territorial Acknowledgement

Greater Victoria Public Library's service area is located on the unceded traditional territories of the Songhees and Xwseps'əm (Esquimalt) Nations, the WSÁNEĆ Nations of STÁUTW(Tsawout) and WJOLÉLP (Tsartlip), and the Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) Nation.

Colonization and systemic racism still impact the lives of Indigenous Peoples today. Their historical and cultural relationship with the land and sea continues as they steward these sacred lands as they have since time immemorial.

3. Welcome and Introductions

4. Consent Agenda

Motion to Approve

4.1. Approval of Agenda

4.2. Approval of Minutes –June 24, 2025 Attachment 4.2

4.3. Chair Report Attachment 4.3

4.4. CEO Report

4.5. Correspondence

4.5.1. Province of BC, Ministry of Municipal Affairs: Public Library Grants Awards
Letter received July 4, 2025 Attachment 4.5.1

4.5.2. Email received from Patron received June 24, 2025 Attachment 4.5.2

4.5.3. Email received Patron received August 8, 2025 Attachment 4.5.3

4.5.4. Email received from Patron August 9, 2025 Attachment 4.5.4

4.5.5. Response to email received August 9, 2025 Attachment 4.5.5

5. Chair's Remarks

For Information

6. Committee Reports

6.1. Planning and Policy Committee- Oral Report

6.1.1. GVPL Policy Reviews Attachment 6.1.1

For Information
Motion to Approve

6.2. Finance Committee- Oral Report

For Information

7. In Camera

Motion to Approve

8. Next Meeting Date

October 28, 2025 12:00pm – 1:00pm

For Information

9. Adjournment



MINUTES
REGULAR BOARD MEETING
GVPL Central Branch, 735 Broughton Street
Community Meeting Room & MS Teams
June 24, 2025

A hybrid meeting of the Greater Victoria Public Library Board was held on the above date. The following individuals were in attendance:

Board Members:

Trustee A. Appleton
Trustee K. Boehnert
Trustee D. Cavens (Vice Chair)
Trustee S. Donaldson
Trustee D. Grove
Trustee R. Henderson
Trustee S. Kim
Trustee S. Lansdowne
Trustee R. McClure
Trustee M. Morley
Trustee T. Phelps Bondaroff
Trustee R. Ranjan
Trustee K. Roessingh
Trustee R. Stromberg
Trustee N. White

Regrets

Trustee S. Khair (Chair)
Trustee G. Lemon
Trustee G. Newton
Trustee M. Wey

Staff:

M. Sawa, CEO/Board Secretary
M. Barnes, Assistant Director, Finance
D Fergusson-Hirmer, Director, People & Culture
D. Wood, Executive Director, Library Services
A. Shojaei, Assistant Director, Safety, Security, Facilities and Risk Management
E. Russell, Recording Secretary
R. Baugniet President, CUPE 410

1. CALL TO ORDER

D. Cavens called the meeting to order at 12:00 pm.

2. TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

D. Cavens provided the Indigenous Acknowledgement.

3. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

The Vice-Chair welcomed and introduced Daylin Fergusson-Hirmer, GVPL's new Director, People and Culture Director, and Stephanie Marston, Library Services Librarian.

4. APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Moved by Trustee Roessingh seconded by Trustee Appleton,

THAT items 4.1 & 4.2 be approved, items 4.3 to 4.5 be received for information.

- 4.1 Approval of Agenda
- 4.2 Approval of Minutes – May 27, 2025
- 4.3 CEO Report
- 4.4 Correspondence from Patron

MOTION CARRIED

5. CHAIR'S REMARKS

D. Cavens thanked trustees for their contributions to the board and committees in the first part of the year. He noted that advocacy efforts continue to encourage the provincial government to review and increase provincial funding for public libraries. As part of these ongoing efforts, a GVPL and the Vancouver Island Regional Library Board chairs have co-authored a letter to the Select Budget Committee

6. COMMITTEE REPORTS

6.1. Planning and Policy Committee

Committee Chair, N. White reviewed the workplan for Planning and Policy Committee over the summer, which includes a review of the three policies that have been identified as priority for updating. It is expected that revisions to these policies will be completed and presented to the Board for approval in the fall.

7. NEW BUSINESS

7.1. BC Summer Reading Club 2025

M. Sawa introduced Library Services Librarian, Stephanie Marston who gave a presentation on this year's B.C. Summer Reading Club Program and responded to trustees' questions regarding the impact of the program.

8. NEXT MEETING DATE:

September 16, 2025; 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm

9. ADJOURNMENT

Moved by Trustee Kim, Seconded by Trustee Appleton

THAT the June 24, 2025 Regular Board Meeting be adjourned.

MOTION CARRIED

Board Chair

Board Secretary



A Warm Welcome to the Fall Season

Dear Trustees,

I hope this month's Chair report finds you all well and that you all had a wonderful and rejuvenating summer.

While summer is often a slower pace for our Board, this year our committees remained very active throughout July and August. I'm grateful for your engagement, which ensured our important policy and budget work continued without interruption.

I also would like to recognize and congratulate GVPL staff for another successful B.C. Summer Reading Club, and all the activities and events they held for families over the summer! Their commitment ensures our libraries remain essential community hubs, especially during the summer months when families are looking for engaging and accessible programming. Thank you for making it another memorable summer at GVPL.

Planning & Policy Committee Update

The Planning & Policy Committee, under the leadership of Chair Nik White and Vice-Chair Susan Kim, held many meetings throughout July and August. The primary focus of these meetings was the comprehensive review of Board Policies V.1 (Intellectual Freedom) and O.1 (The Collection). I am pleased to report that the committee has completed its review, and these updated policies will be presented to the Board for final approval at our upcoming September 16th meeting.

A big thank you to staff for all the work that went into preparing these meetings, including delivering detailed staff reports, and to the knowledgeable librarians for leading Trustees through our rich discussions. My appreciation also goes to our Trustees who generously gave their time during the summer to provide invaluable direction and feedback to staff. This collaborative effort is crucial to ensuring our policies remain relevant and effective.

Finance Committee Update

The Finance Committee also met in August for a preliminary review of GVPL's draft 2026 Budget and the accompanying 5-Year Financial Plan. Thank you to Melina Barnes and team for their preparation of this year's materials, and to Committee Chair Karel Roessingh and Vice-Chair Scott Landsdowne for their diligent leadership in guiding Trustees through discussions.

The Finance committee will reconvene October 14 for a follow-up and final review of the budget before making a recommendation to the Board. I want to strongly encourage all Trustees, particularly our municipal council representatives, to mark this October meeting in your calendars and please plan to attend. Your insights and perspectives from your municipalities are vital to our discussions.

UBCM Conference – Public Libraries Reception

This month, Victoria will host the annual Union of B.C. Municipalities (UBCM) conference. I am delighted to announce that the Greater Victoria Public Library will be providing the venue for a special reception hosted by the Association of B.C. Public Library Directors (ABCPLD) for conference delegates.

4.3 Chair ReportPage **2** of **2**

This event is a fantastic opportunity to connect with elected officials and municipal staff from across the province, and the chance to highlight the vital role that public libraries play in communities large and small.

The reception will take place on **Tuesday, September 23, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.** at our sx^wenx^wəŋ təŋəx^w James Bay Branch.

The event will be open to all registered UBCM conference delegates. I would also like to extend a warm invitation to all GVPL Board Trustees, both our citizen representatives and our council appointees, to join us for the evening. More detailed information about this event will be shared during our September 16th Board meeting.

Finally, I would like to express my personal thanks to Vice-Chair Cavens, who has graciously agreed to chair the September 16th Board meeting on my behalf, so that I can be free to moderate an event on campus this day on the enduring role of libraries in preserving our cultural record, safeguarding truth, and nurturing the intellectual fabric of society. Critical work you all contribute to through this Board!

I look forward to connecting with you all soon!

Sincerely,

Shahira Khair, Board Chair, Greater Victoria Public Library Board



September 16, 2025

Welcome to September! It has been a very busy and productive summer at GVPL, and we are looking forward to an exciting Fall. I am pleased to share highlights with you in this report.

BC Summer Reading Club

This year's B.C. Summer Reading Club was, in the words of staff, "absolutely incredible.... Kids came flying in for 2025 and we saw a lot of unexpected growth". The final statistics are not yet finalized but we expect to be very close to the 10,000 mark for participation numbers. Kudos to staff for all that their efforts to make this year's SRC such a resounding success and for the many other programming enhancements and initiatives offered throughout the summer months. These summer offerings were a tremendous success and brought joy and learning to thousands of library users across our community.

Hiroshima-Nagasaki Poster Exhibition

On Saturday, August 2, GVPL was honoured to host the opening of the Hiroshima–Nagasaki Poster Exhibition at the Central Branch from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. Created by the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and brought to Victoria by the Victoria Peace Project, the exhibition marked the 80th anniversary of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The opening event featured remarks from Mayor Marianne Alto, Mayor Doug Kobayashi, and Dr. Midori Ogasawara, a University of Victoria professor and lead organizer of the exhibition. Families attending Saturday's event were invited to take part in a peace-themed Family Storytime along with paper crane-folding activities. The display was on view at the Central Branch until August 15.

University of Victoria's Thunderfest

Earlier this month, members of our Library Services and Marketing and Development teams represented GVPL at the University of Victoria's annual Thunderfest event, where they connected with as many as 5,000 students. GVPL also contributed materials to 3,000 student welcome packages. We appreciate the opportunity to partner with the University of Victoria Library to ensure that incoming UVic students know about the many services and resources available to them through their public library.

Welcoming Week

GVPL is celebrating Welcoming Week, which is running from September 12 to 21. This annual campaign aims to highlight our community's strengths and differences, ensuring everyone feels included and valued—especially those who are new to our neighbourhoods, workplaces, or country. We all understand how important it is to feel welcome when starting somewhere new. GVPL is proud to support newcomers through our inclusive programs, multilingual collections, and community partnerships.

Strong Cities Network

I was privileged to be invited to participate in a Strong Cities Network event in Vancouver earlier this month. The topic was 'Countering Online harms in British Columbia: The Role of Municipalities in Preventing and Responding to Online Threats to Social Cohesion'. Representatives from various municipal organizations attended and the role of public libraries was featured in discussion regarding municipal partnerships and services.

New Digital Media Lab at Esquimalt Branch

I am delighted to announce that our new digital media lab will officially open at the Esquimalt Branch on Thursday, September 18, at 1:00 pm. The Lab is GVPL's first self-serve digitization space, providing the community with free access to preserve their personal histories by converting photos, slides, VHS tapes, and audio cassettes into digital formats. This new service removes technology and financial barriers and helps families share stories across generations. We are grateful for the support of the Province of British Columbia, the Victoria Foundation and donations from the Friends of the Greater Victoria Public Library and anonymous donors which has made this project possible.

Fall Programming

The Indigenous Stories Book Club returns this month, offering a valuable opportunity for community members to learn and reflect together. Led by Carmen Rodriguez de France, UVic's Assistant Professor of Indigenous Education, the series explores Indigenous writings in history, culture, and storytelling. Since 2017, GVPL has partnered with the University of Victoria to offer this program, and I'm pleased to see that the sessions continue to garner community interest.

GVPL's Fall Early Literacy Programs begin this week, and I am especially pleased to see that the Central Saanich Branch will host Baby Time and Family Storytime as part of this series. These programs are beloved by families across our service area, and I would like to thank everyone who contributes to their planning and delivery.

UBCM – Public Libraries Reception

You may have seen recent media coverage featuring Cari Lynn Gawletz, Chair of the Association of B.C. Public Library Directors, highlighting the urgent need for increased provincial funding for public libraries. Currently, provincial funding has remained at \$14 million annually for the past 16 years. During this month's Union of B.C. Municipalities Convention, delegates will debate a resolution calling on the province to raise annual funding to \$30 million, tie future increases to inflation, and establish a dedicated capital fund.

As noted in this month's Chair Report, GVPL will be providing the venue for a special reception hosted by the Association of B.C. Public Library Directors (ABCPLD) during the UBCM conference in Victoria this month. The reception will be taking place on Tuesday, September 23, from 7-9 p.m. at the *sx̱w̱enx̱w̱ən tənəx̱w̱* James Bay branch and will be open to all UBCM conference delegates. GVPL Board trustees, both elected and citizen representatives, are welcome to attend. More information about this event will be shared at the September 16 Board meeting.

Traditional Territory Land Acknowledgement

Recognizing and respecting the traditional territories where we live, and work is a crucial part of GVPL's commitment to Truth and Reconciliation. Earlier this year, work initiated by the Diversity Portfolio of Library Services and GVPL librarians began the process of updating our territorial acknowledgment. This update reflects the traditional and unceded territories of First Nations that we acknowledge throughout our service area. The full text of the updated text is as follows:

Greater Victoria Public Library's service area is located on the unceded traditional territories of the Songhees and Xwseps'əm (Esquimalt) Nations, the WSÁNEĆ Nations of S̱ÁUTW (Tsawout) and W̱JOḺEP (Tsartlip), and the Sc'ianew (Beecher Bay) Nation.

Colonization and systemic racism still impact the lives of Indigenous Peoples today. Their historical and cultural relationship with the land and sea continues as they steward these sacred lands as they have since time immemorial

Senior Leadership Team

On August 19, we bid farewell to Daphne Wood, Executive Director of Library Services. In addition to her role as Executive Director, Library Services, Daphne filled multiple senior leadership roles, ranging from Communications & Development, Strategic Planning, PMO, I.T., Collections and Technical Services. I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the tremendous contributions Daphne has made to GVPL and to congratulate her as she embarks on new opportunities to support strategic planning and measure community impacts.

Daphne's departure has generated some interim changes in the Senior Leadership Team, including the appointment of Darrell Joyce as Acting Director, Library Services, Branch Operations and Service Delivery as the additional appointments of temporary Assistant Director positions that will oversee and Library Service s Design. These interim temporary positions will be in effect for the next 6 months.

Maureen



Attachment 4.5.1

July 4, 2025

Reference: 187420

Shahira Khair
 Board Chair
 Greater Victoria Public Library
 735 Broughton St.
 Victoria V8W 3H2
 c/o: msawa@gvpl.ca

Re: Public Library Grant Award Letter June 2025

Dear Board Chair Shahira Khair:

The Ministry of Housing and Municipal Affairs, Public Libraries Branch (PLB) is pleased to inform you that the library will receive the following grants to support public library services and provincial programs:

- **Per Capita Operating Grant: \$627429**
- **Resource Sharing Grant: \$3162.88**
- **BC OneCard Grant: \$24000**
- **Literacy and Equity Grant: \$21800**

Details regarding each grant and calculation will be published in the *Public Libraries Provincial Grants Allocations* document at <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/sports-culture/arts-culture/public-libraries/tool-resources-library-administrators/provincial-funding>.

These grants, while distributed separately, can be combined to support provincial priorities and *BC's Strategic Plan for Public Library Service*. They complement local funding and enable participation in province-wide programs and services offered through library sector service partners

2025 Library Enhancement Grants

The library will receive a one-time enhancement grant of **\$40807.12**. This is the final year that libraries will receive such targeted grants.

This grant should be used to support local and regional initiatives, expand services, and addresses community needs. It can be used in conjunction with previously distributed provincial grants and used beyond 2025. In some cases, libraries may hold funds in reserve for service changes anticipated in the future.

Strategic Context for Provincial Funding

Public libraries are vital for healthy, connected communities, supporting diversity, learning, and digital access. The provincial funding recognizes the strategic importance of libraries as community anchors that help eliminate barriers—social, financial, physical, and structural—by providing free or affordable access to resources, information, and technology. Investing in libraries fosters community resilience, equity, and prosperity in BC. While the Province is undertaking a government-wide program review, Budget 2025 currently anticipates funding for public libraries to be \$14 million through 2027.

Process

The ministry will deposit the total amount of **\$717199** into your designated financial institution's account. An email will confirm once the transfer is complete.

The *Public Libraries Provincial Grants Allocations* document is available [online](#) and lists the funds allocated to each library for 2025 as well as the description of each grant. Please save a copy for your financial statements.

Reporting

The library board is responsible for ensuring all conditions outlined in this letter are met annually.

To maintain ongoing provincial funding, your library must submit the following reports:

- 2025 Provincial Public Library Grants Report (PLGR) – **due March 2, 2026**
- 2025 Statement of Financial Information (SOFI) - **due May 15, 2026**
- 2025 Annual Survey of BC's Public Libraries – **due May 15, 2026**

Additional instructions, templates, and updates will be available from the [Public Libraries Reporting and Accountability](#) webpage. Instructions will include specific details about the specific reporting required for annual and one-time grants. Please ensure you review the instructions for guidance on the use and reporting of these funds.

Additional Conditions

The ministry will reclaim any portion of grants not used for their intended purposes or if accountability requirements are unmet. Public libraries must comply with the *Library Act* and applicable legislation.

Questions about the use of this funding should be directed to the Public Libraries Branch.

The Province is committed to transparency under the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (FOIPPA). All submitted reports may be made available to the public in accordance with FOIPPA.

Grant Recognition

Libraries are asked to acknowledge the Province's support on written and digital materials whenever reasonable. The following acknowledgment may be used:

"We gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the Province of British Columbia."

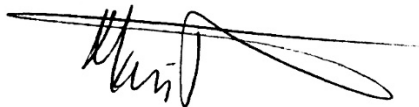
Use of BC's [BC Visual Identity](#) logo requires permission. Organizations should review the [guidelines](#) on the BC Mark logo to ensure proper use.

Appreciation

Thank you to all library boards and staff for your hard work and dedication to providing important community services. Through your efforts and partnerships, you ensure residents have access to the information and skills necessary for success. Together, we can continue to build innovative and equitable library services for all British Columbians.

If you have any questions about this letter or grant use, please do not hesitate to call 1-800-663-7051 or email PUBLIB@gov.bc.ca or reach out to me directly at mari.martin@gov.bc.ca.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mari Martin', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Mari Martin
Director, Public Libraries Branch

CC: Maureen Sawa, Library Director

Attachment 4.5.2

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fw: GVPL Summer Programming 2025
Date: June 24, 2025 10:25:46 AM

*** [This message originated from outside GVPL. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.] ***

Good morning, [REDACTED]:

I have been asked by this resident to forward the following correspondence to the GVPL Board. This same resident has notably gone so far as to offer making library branches more accessible and kid-friendly as either a volunteer or contractors.

Hoping to pass this onto the Board for discussion at our earliest convenience, understanding that the agenda for today's meeting is set.

Regards,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 20, 2025 10:21 AM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: GVPL Summer Programming 2025

Hi [REDACTED]

I'm writing today to better understand the significant decline in summer program offerings at the Greater Victoria Public Library.

As a parent of three children under the age of 9, library programming is a vital lifeline for our whole family's health and well-being. When my first child suffered from colic for all of her first year of life, we accessed library programming 6 days out of 7 as a means of maintaining both my sanity and the critical parent-child attachment bond. Library programming gave us a reason to leave the house, and a safe, clean, caring, non-judgmental space to access every single day. There are simply no other places to go as a parent with a colicky child; we were unwelcome and quite literally shut out of everywhere. Looking back on it now, daily library programming for babies and toddlers saved my life in a very real way.

Furthermore, as a special education teacher in a high needs middle school, I can attest to how summer library programming is a crucial to lowering the Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) that plague our students by offering spaces of belonging, access to nourishing materials, referrals to services, and connections with stable, supportive

adults. Throughout my career, I have regularly enrolled my students, especially those who live at the intersection of multiple marginalized identities, in summer programming, which has consistently helped them through the long summer months. Especially for reluctant readers, it's not enough to have the library simply be open (which as you know, it is now not on Sundays), but for there to be a *reason* for kids to go, such as a Lego club, board game cafe, robotics program, comics workshop, etc.

With the last week of school fast approaching, I implore you to do whatever needs doing so that youth programming, from infants through to teenagers, can be offered at every branch this July and August. As both a professor in Child and Youth Care/Education, and a licensed, practicing teacher, I am happy to collaborate to find solutions so that kids and families can access the programming that they need and deserve in summer 2025.

Please do not hesitate to reach out,

Age Group	Gender	Percentage Vaccinated
18-24	Male	~10%
25-34	Male	~65%
35-44	Male	~55%
45-54	Male	~100%
55-64	Male	~35%
65-74	Male	~85%
75-84	Male	~90%
85+	Male	~75%

Attachment 4.5.3

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Support for our 2SLGBTQ+ community
Date: August 9, 2025 5:02:09 PM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED]. [Learn why this is important](#)

*** [This message originated from outside GVPL. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.] ***

From: [REDACTED]
Date: August 9, 2025 at 4:58:28 PM PDT
To:
Subject: Support for our 2SLGBTQ+ community

Dear [REDACTED]

I am hoping this email will reach the Library board.

I want to commend our Greater Victoria library system for their inclusion of 2SLGBTQ+ books, displays and materials during Pride month of June. At a time when exclusion and banning of books has become rampant, I felt very proud when I went to my library and saw the respect and acknowledgment of Pride month.

Please know that a significant number of your patrons support our 2SLGBTQ+ community and those youth who are finding their way.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]
Esquimalt
Sent from my iPad

Attachment 4.5.4

From: [REDACTED]
To: [CEO Office](#)
Cc: [REDACTED]
Subject: Request to Establish Ukrainian-Language Book Collection in GVPL
Date: August 8, 2025 12:01:40 AM

You don't often get email from [REDACTED] [Learn why this is important](#)

*** [This message originated from outside GVPL. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.] ***

Dear Greater Victoria Public Library Board,

On behalf of the Ukrainian-Canadian Cultural Society of Vancouver Island (UCCSVI), we are writing to respectfully request the establishment of a Ukrainian-language book collection within the Greater Victoria Public Library system.

Since the start of the full-scale Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the Ukrainian population on Vancouver Island has grown significantly. Many of these newcomers arrived under difficult circumstances, mostly without the opportunity to bring books from home or the means to purchase new ones. Access to Ukrainian-language materials is vital for children, families, students, and seniors in our community to stay connected to their language and culture.

Currently, Ukrainian-language books are not available in the Greater Victoria Public Library, while Russian-language books are. The absence of Ukrainian materials in the public library system makes it difficult for our community to access reading resources in their native language.

While UCCSVI maintains [the Library in the Ukrainian Cultural Centre](#), it is only open for a few hours per week and is not wheelchair accessible. As such, it cannot meet the growing and diverse needs of the Ukrainian-speaking population across Greater Victoria. We believe the public library system, with its broad reach and accessibility, is the ideal partner to help fill this gap.

To support the creation of a Ukrainian-language collection, UCCSVI is prepared to donate a selection of Ukrainian books and work with your team to ensure they meet library standards.

We hope the Greater Victoria Public Library will consider this proposal as part of its ongoing commitment to inclusivity, diversity, and community support. We would welcome the opportunity to discuss this further and collaborate on making Ukrainian-language books publicly accessible.

Sincerely,



[Ukrainian-Canadian Cultural Society of Vancouver Island](#)

Ukrainian-Canadian Cultural Society of Vancouver Island –
operates the Ukrainian Cultural Centre and exists to promote
cultural activities

Embrace the spirit of new beginnings and renewal by joining or renewing your membership with the Ukrainian Canadian Cultural Society of Vancouver Island. Your membership supports the preservation and celebration of Ukrainian culture, traditions, and community on Vancouver Island, as well as the operation and maintenance of our Cultural Centre. Membership perks include voting privileges to ...

uccsvi.ca



September 11, 2025

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Victoria, BC [REDACTED]

Via email [REDACTED]

Dear [REDACTED]

Thank you for your inquiry into the establishment of a Ukrainian-language book collection for all ages at Greater Victoria Public Library.

I am pleased to advise that, based on community input, GVPL staff have been working with our library vendor to create a new collection of Ukrainian materials and expand the languages we offer at GVPL. We anticipate that the books should start arriving at the end of 2025, at which point we will share the news of the new collection with our community and patrons.

Thank you also for your offer of a donation of Ukrainian books. While GVPL doesn't generally accept donations of books, in this circumstance we would be interested and appreciative of the possible donation, if they fit within our collection policy. Once the new Ukrainian collection is established and available for borrowing, the Coordinator, Collections and Technical Services will follow up with you.

With warm regards,

Maureen Sawa

CEO

Greater Victoria Public Library

Cc: GVPL Board of Trustees

**MEMORANDUM**

Date: September 12, 2025

To: GVPL Board of Trustees

From: Planning and Policy Committee

CC: Maureen Sawa, CEO

Subject: GVPL Policy Reviews: V.1 Intellectual Freedom
O.1 The Collection

Background

Over the summer months, the Planning and Policy Committee of the Board completed a comprehensive review of GVPL Board Policies V.1 (Intellectual Freedom) and O.1 (the Collection), in consultation with senior staff.

Completion of the review of the Policy V.1 (Intellectual Freedom) has been deferred to 2026, pending release of the British Columbia Library Association (BCLA)'s updated Intellectual Freedom Policy.

Review of Policy O.1 (The Collection) was completed. The revised policy (as attached) will be presented to the GVPL Board for approval on September 16, 2025.

Motion:

THAT the Board of Trustees approve the revised Policy O.1 The Collection on September 16, 2025.

Board Policy

Policy O.1, The Collection

Purpose/Background

The Greater Victoria Public Library's (Library) collection enriches the quality of life for its diverse community by anticipating the community's need for information and recreation, facilitating lifelong learning, nurturing a love of reading, and providing a variety of formats and means of access. The collections at the Library are selected and maintained in support of the Library's vision, mission, and values.

This policy explains the Library's collection philosophy and selection principles.

Scope

This policy applies to any Library staff or organization that undertakes the selection or de-selection of materials for the Library's collections.

This policy applies to collections in all formats held by the Library and made available to the public. It is not reflective of subscription content in some digital resources provided by the Library.

Policy Statement and Details

Responsibility for Selection

Collection development is an ongoing process requiring professional judgment and experience to balance competing needs and demands, striving for optimal use of the human and fiscal resources entrusted to the Library. Overall authority and responsibility for the collection rests with the Chief Executive Officer/Chief Librarian (CEO) and may be delegated to staff who are qualified by reason of education and training.

Access to Collections

The Library's collection provides access to high quality, accurate information on a broad range of topics and genres.

To ensure that content is discoverable, accessible, and responsive to different needs, the Library continually seeks new ways of making resources available, by evaluating and implementing emerging formats, technologies, and curation strategies.

Library fiscal resources are not unlimited. Selection of materials must be consistent with budget allocations. Resource sharing with other libraries, as well as electronic and other methods of information access, are valid and necessary ways of meeting patron needs.

As all collection items are part of a single, system-wide collection, most material can be requested for borrowing at any branch.

The Library may control use of any collection material in order to protect items deemed susceptible to theft or damage by users, or to ensure the widest possible use of materials by library patrons.

Parents and legal guardians are empowered to decide which materials their children will access. The Library will not exclude materials from the collection that could be encountered by children. Responsibility for children's use of materials rests with their parents or legal guardians.

The Library will safeguard and defend each individual's privacy and dignity to decide what they want to read, view, listen to, or what services they want to access.

Collection Philosophy

The Greater Victoria Public Library Board (Board) endorses the Canadian Federation of Library Associations' Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Libraries, which states in part: Libraries have a core responsibility to safeguard and facilitate access to constitutionally protected expressions of knowledge, imagination, ideas, and opinion, including those which some individuals and groups consider unconventional, unpopular or unacceptable.

The Library provides collections that:

- Support the Library's mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities
- Recognize the diverse nature of the community, as well as the varied backgrounds and needs of community members
- Represent a wide range of ideas, creative thought, information, and viewpoints within the constraints of availability to purchase, space, and budget
- Meet present and future literacy, informational, recreational, cultural, and educational needs of the community
- Inspire the love of reading and support lifelong learning, discovery, and enjoyment

The Library strives to acquire content created by and representative of underrepresented, marginalized, and systemically oppressed groups protected by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. To this end, the Library will apply an inclusive lens to how materials and resources are catalogued, labelled, displayed, and promoted.

The Library is committed to supporting learning and action for Truth and Reconciliation by providing robust Indigenous collections. The Library is committed to uplifting Indigenous voices at every library branch, in alignment with the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action on Education for Reconciliation.

Materials are selected that represent varying points of view which are of current interest and future significance within the constraints of budget, space, and availability of resources. Materials reflect current conditions, trends, and controversies so that members of the community may inform themselves and make individual judgments. The presence of an item in the collection does not constitute endorsement of its contents by the Library. The Library does not purchase, retain, or make accessible in its permanent collection, materials and resources in violation of the statutes of Canada or British Columbia.

Principles of Selection

The Library's collections are developed in response to the informational, recreational, cultural, and educational needs of the community. Materials are included to meet demand, for their potential to foster or create interests, and to contribute to a varied collection.

Materials and resources are selected using professional judgement based on: reviews, collection knowledge, demonstrated or anticipated public demand, recommendations by subject specialists, reputation or significance of the creator, and customer requests.

The children's collection includes a broad range of materials that support children's social, emotional, and intellectual development at their various ages and stages. Children are the primary audience for this collection and their needs and interests will be met first.

The Library has an interest in local history and in works by local creators that meet our selection guidelines.

Where there is evident demand, the Library may provide materials and resources in languages other than English and French. The decision to establish or discontinue a language collection is based on census data, available budget, and other supporting evidence.

Emerging formats and technologies may be added and declining ones retired where appropriate and given available resources.

Academic, technical, and other professional materials will only be acquired if they are useful for a general audience.

The following will not cause an item to be automatically included or excluded from the collection:

- Race, religion, nationality, or political view of an author
- Frankness or coarseness of language
- Controversial content
- Endorsement or disapproval of an individual or group

Criteria

Some or all of the following criteria may be taken into consideration during the selection process for all materials, whether purchased or donated:

- Reputation or significance of creator and/or publisher
- Purpose, authority, quality, accuracy of the work
- Clarity, style, comprehensiveness, and depth of treatment
- Consideration by professional reviewers and critics, award nominations, or inclusion in authoritative sources
- Currency, date of publication and sustained interest
- Relevance to community needs and interests
- Canadian and local content
- Suitability of subject, style, and reading level for intended audience
- Representative of notable trends and genres
- Inclusive of Indigenous, multicultural and diverse points of view
- Relationship to existing collection and other material on the subject
- Budget and space priorities
- Suitability of format, appearance, and durability for library use
- Availability to borrow from other libraries or accessibility from other widely available sources

Collection items need not meet all criteria to be selected.

Suggestions for Purchase

The Library welcomes suggestions from the public for the purchase of library materials. Suggestions for purchase are considered according to the same selection criteria as applied to all materials purchased.

Material Donations

The Library may accept gifts which enhance its collections as outlined in Board Policy 3.4 Gifts and Fundraising. Material donations are subject to the same criteria for selection as purchased materials. Up-to-date information on what materials the Library currently accepts may be found on the Library website.

De-selection and Discarding of Materials

De-selection of materials is an ongoing process that maintains and improves the currency, accuracy, appearance, and vitality of the collection. Frequency of circulation, community interest, physical condition, obsolete formats, and availability of more current information are factors considered when deciding whether to withdraw items.

Merchandising and Promotion

The Library displays physical materials in a variety of formats in all its branches. The Library also shares information about materials in its collections through promotions using various communication methods, including the Library's website and social media accounts. Materials are selected for display or promotion for a wide variety of reasons, including but not limited to:

- Relation to current events, news, and pop culture
- Interest and demand for genres and specific types of content
- Relation to Library programs, services, and organizational goals
- Cultural, historical, or educational significance
- Diversity of voices and content

Review Process

The Library recognizes the right of individuals to express opposition to creators' ideas or to their creative expression in items selected for the Library collections. While library patrons have the right to reject for themselves items of which they do not approve, they do not have the right to restrict the freedom of others.

If a patron feels that a title in the Library collection falls outside the criteria outlined in this policy, they are invited to complete a written Request for Reconsideration form. Patrons must acknowledge having read the Collections Policy and Intellectual Freedom statements prior to completing the form.

Decisions made about challenged materials will be communicated to the originators of the requests following the completion of a formal staff review. The final decision concerning Library materials rests with the Chief Executive Officer.

Related Policy **0.5 The Appeal Process**

Staff conduct business according to Board policy and will attempt to resolve any library patron issue. However, when a patron disagrees with a policy or decision of the CEO or designate, it can be appealed, providing it is done in writing to the Board. The Board will investigate each appeal and respond in writing.

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