

April 12, 2019

Ms. Jeannie Mah
jmah@sasktel.net

Dear Ms. Mah:

RE: Delegation Submission of January 22, 2019

Thank you for your interest in RPL and for bringing your comments and questions to the attention of the Board of Directors. You have raised a number of questions about Library processes, as well as our Submissions and Delegations policy, and I would like to reply to them in this letter.

Board Meeting Expectations

The Board approved mission and vision statements that frame our governance strategy are self-explanatory and clearly stated on the RPL website (<https://reginalibrary.ca/about>). It is unfortunate that you have reached the conclusion that the language and statements made by individuals at both the January 2018 and March 2018 Board meetings was acceptable and tolerable in a public setting.

You raised a number of questions in your submission to present at the January 22 Board meeting, and I am happy to provide responses below.

While the FRPL were told that five of our comments were rude, disrespectful and possibly defamatory, we are only left to guess: who and what? What are the rules? What is it that we can and cannot say? Are we not allowed to discuss a library program or a library service which concerns us? Are we not allowed to mention a name of staff or management, either in praise or in criticism? Are we not allowed to quote what management has said or written? Are we never allowed to question, critique, or comment? [...] how are we to deal with our tone?

The RPL Board does not expect a presenter to downplay or omit issues or concerns they have. In fact, they welcome individuals or groups that care enough to come forward and point out perceived oversights or offer feedback and suggestions. We are not, however, prepared to allow individuals to verbally and deliberately embarrass or humiliate the Board, Library staff, or members of the public. Whether in words or in-person, as a Board, we will choose a spirited discussion over a mean-spirited rant. And it is with respect that we assume you share our sentiments.

If we cannot ask questions at a public meeting, and if we cannot address the RPL Board with our concerns, if our correspondence to a public board is never seen, or perhaps never even discussed with the RPL Board, then, how, exactly, are we to communicate with our Regina Public Library Board?

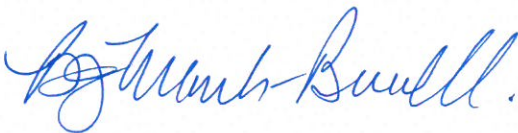
The Board's Submissions and Delegations policy provides specifically for members of the public to ask questions at public meetings, address the RPL Board with concerns, and submit correspondence to the Board. While the route to the Board can vary depending upon whether an item is submitted correspondence or a delegation request, the Board is always aware of and free to discuss any item received from the public.

How will the RPL keep a true record of its own history?

The Regina Public Library has recently turned 110 years old. Its history pre-dates the Internet by several decades. The public record of the Regina Public Library is in minute books and files, both physical and electronic. The Library's website is an efficient and convenient way to provide information to the public about the programs, services, business, and history of RPL. The RPL website is a communications tool. All correspondence to the Board is retained and stored, whether it is posted to the website or not.

I will close by reminding you that the Board is open to receiving your comments, criticisms, and suggestions for improvements to programs and services offered by RPL and can be reached via email (therplboard@reginalibrary.ca).

Respectfully and sincerely,



Barbara March-Burwell
Vice-Chair
Regina Public Library Board