

TRUSTEE MEET-UP OCT. 17, 2020

Louise and I attended this meet-up via Zoom along with 1 other trustees from small libraries around the province.....

Purpose: To discuss the board roles and responsibilities in supporting the library director with a focus on evaluations and compensation.

Facilitators: Babs Kelly - BCLTA and Andrea Freeman - Executive Director of the ABCPLD

Andrea presented the results of an anonymous survey of library directors. They responded to three questions:

What is your current evaluation experience?

What would your ideal evaluation experience be?

How would you like to be involved in reviewing and setting compensation?

Responses to the first question varied from very

positive to "not yet had an evaluation", "it felt like getting a report card at the end of the year and less like a conversation invested in supporting my success and development", "it's too onerous for trustees to manage and rarely leads to actionable items for me".

The ideal evaluation experience would be a formal annual evaluation as well as informal conversations throughout the year, contain no surprises, would involve the librarian in design and planning, would be based on feed-back from more people than just trustees and would include self evaluation. Librarians as well as trustees thought a template would be helpful.

The directors wanted to be involved in ALL aspects of the compensation conversation. They felt that boards needed to be sure they were providing a competitive salary and overall employment package and that increases should be

outlined in the contract. Although these were their wishes, their comments revealed that this was not necessarily their experience. A couple of comments (that sort of hit home for us and made us feel a bit embarrassed) were, "There isn't much room to increase my wage so I never think about it", "I find the compensation review an extremely awkward and unsatisfying process. I feel I am expected to graciously accept what is presented to me even though most of us are very underpaid for our level of responsibility."

In the discussion that followed trustees comments also varied. At least one had never done an evaluation, another felt overwhelmed and ill prepared. Some felt it was wrong to consult other staff when preparing for an evaluation, others felt it was okay as long as the library director had given permission. Two trustees felt very strongly that it was a board responsibility to ensure adequate compensation, others felt

powerless due to budget constraints.

We were left feeling that we were not doing too badly in the evaluation area although we do need to get more feed-back from Karli re: her experience. Her salary is clearly inadequate and we will continue to do what we can to remedy this.