



Palliser Regional Library
366 Coteau Street West
Moose Jaw, SK S6H 5C9
306-693-3669

Friday, April 28, 2017.

Dear RM, Town and Village Councils;

Palliser funding has been cut from \$687,000 to \$285,000. Minister of Education, Don Morgan, has requested that we contact all the towns, villages and RMs within Palliser and ask them if they would be in favour of a onetime hike to cover expenses until the end of 2017 with no promise of restored funding by the government in 2018. All things being equal at Palliser, this would mean a per capita increase to the levy of \$7.38 which would bring it to \$20.88 (base), \$27.63 (towns and villages with a library) or \$34.38 (Assiniboia). The branches already purchase an additional 54.5 open hours per week across the system at a cost of \$54,571.75, most of which is funded by municipalities.

However, all things are not equal as, according to the Library Act of 1996, we have a city with the right of veto as they have more than 25% of the population. It would cost the City of Moose Jaw an additional \$245,562 on top of the roughly 3.75 million in other unannounced funding cuts in the 2017 budget.

Palliser's Recommendation to the Minister

Restoration of full funding while undergoing a third party organizational audit:

Newfoundland "temporarily" pulled back their library cuts, fully restoring funding while they are doing an organizational audit. This is being done in consultation with the libraries in cities and towns to determine the need for services, and organizational efficiencies.

What we need of Your Council:

1. We need to hear from your representatives at the regional board meeting on April 28th if they would be in favor of the levy increase which would only partially restore the headquarters funding to provide for efficiencies of service and standardization across the region.
2. A letter to Minister Morgan with Councils' decision and why.

Please call me with your questions.

Sincerely,

Jan Smith
Director,
director@palliserlibrary.ca

FAQ

1. What would the Rural levy increase do for Palliser:

This would leave Palliser in the position of recovering from the rural branches, \$154,434. This would allow us to restore the rural courier service (\$74,000), and a ½ acquisitions clerk plus processing clerk with a rural book budget of \$40,000 which will allow us to restore the key online services plus purchase some materials. It still leaves each branch on the hook for onsite computer tech support.

2. Palliser Funding Philosophy:

- Palliser has always believed that there exist 3 funding pots that are not interchangeable.
- Each municipality already pays for the upkeep and maintenance of its local branch and is not included in the Palliser levy/budget.
- The City of Moose Jaw money is to pay for City of Moose Jaw materials purchases and staffing.
- The rural levies remain in the rural area and are to fund rural staffing, training and education and \$12,000 for local material purchases.
- The Headquarters funding was to provide for efficiencies and standardization of services through bulk purchasing and education. Our dollar goes a lot further when we purchase in volume (eg: average price reduction from the vendors, based on volume purchased, is 30-39.2%). Supplies when centrally purchased and processed also save the tax payer about the same.

3. Palliser is a net materials lender for the province – well in excess of our size and funding received

- The 94,431 books Palliser lent out saved the province \$1,888,620 less cost of couriers (app. \$200,000).
- Palliser, borrowed 39,000 allowing us to give our patrons access to another \$780,000 worth of materials that we did not have access to – a bargain at the price.
- **100,092 digital products were downloaded** by Palliser patrons in 2016 – a bargain at the \$24,000 paid to the vendors for their products. This funding was made possible through the government funding of collections. These products have had to be discontinued as the contracts expired.

Palliser's Replies to Minister Morgan's Comments in the Press

Issue 1: Palliser Surplus – \$2,200,00

The statement cited by the Minister made a fundamental mistake and included the Net Investment in Tangible Capital Assets of \$1,558,350 as defined in Schedule 1. The Tangible Capital Asset include the land, the buildings, furniture and equipment, vehicle, SILS investment share and the \$1,420,017 of that number is the value of the actual library collection.

Palliser's actual dedicated reserves total \$392,249 and represent a true rainy-day fund. From that number, \$39,000 has to come out of the automation fund to cover SILS costs for this year. We had intended to buy one new vehicle this year to replace our 8 year old vehicle and would have needed to replace our courier van next year, as it will be reaching the 400,000 km mark.

To complicate matters, past practice and information from previous iterations of Provincial Library and reinforced by government reporting patterns, was that all the government money was to be spent by December 31 and not March 31st. This means that Palliser will have to dip into reserves for another \$223,628 to cover 2017 expenditures to March 31st plus the 2 months of severance.

Reserve Name	Held on Dec 31 2016	Owning Organization
Automation	\$116,765.47	Palliser
Equipment	\$65,387.73	Palliser
Vehicle	\$143,286.53	Palliser
Building	\$66,809.77	Palliser
Sick Pay – rural branches	\$28,764.05	Rural branches - not Palliser
SILS staff computer replacement - Evergreen	\$22,043.83	Rural branches - not Palliser
Public Access Computer replacement	\$16,671.54	Rural branches - not Palliser
Joan Heaton Estate bequest	\$105,909.22	Rural branches, Moose Jaw - not Palliser

Issue 2: Number of libraries per person

- **All branch libraries in Palliser are owned and operated by the town or village that they are located in.** No funding from the provincial government goes to funding these facilities and **the operation of these facilities is a municipal choice** made not by Palliser or the provincial government but by the towns served - local control to meet local needs.
- In Palliser, **100% of the rural levy** from the town or village hosting the library and the surrounding RM **goes to pay for the open hours of the branch.**
- **The Province pays for ½ hour of open time per week per branch**

Issue 3: Why do we have so many libraries in Saskatchewan?

- 89% of the population in Manitoba is located on the Highways 1 corridor.
- 83% of the population of Alberta is concentrated in urban areas
- 64% of Saskatchewan is located in urban centres, 36% is located in the RMs
- Saskatchewan has 2 times the number of RMs than exist in Alberta and 4 times that of Manitoba.
- Rural Saskatchewan is more diversely populated and the rural population needs to be remembered as they need more services, the school division and the RMS to be on a level playing field with the urban centres in order to maintain the rural population and economy.

Issue 3: School and public libraries

- **30%** of our rural branches are in towns and villages which no longer have a school: Elbow, Tugaskie, Wood Mountain, Briercrest, Willow Bunch and Riverhurst.
- 3 more of our branches are located in towns in danger of losing their schools.
- 2 branches are located in towns with multiple schools (Assiniboia and Moose Jaw).
- The Prairie South School Board has been steadily reducing library staffing in schools and discontinued its resource centre library for teachers in 2015. Its resource collections are in disarray and, for the most part, not being refreshed, added to, or weeded.
- It would make the government a player in the very bricks and mortar that they do not want to be in. By becoming a player in the local library scene it gives them an investment in the facilities. The facilities would need to be modified so that they public library would have its own entrance and facilities, in order to be accessible to the public.
- What to do about day time programming for seniors and pre-k students? The library would not be open to the public
- One possible advantage more open hours but at what cost to the municipality? Higher salaries, Forced space rental? Additional money for books? Asbestos abatement?

Issue 5: Declining circulation rumours

- While this is true from a pure book perspective (365,845 local circulation, plus 140,317 out of region), libraries are much more than books. Our electronic circulation in 2016 was 100,092 within Palliser. Altogether, the 606,254 items circulated is the highest in the history of the Palliser region. In 2015, it was 554,179 items circulated. This represents a 9.14% increase in circulation year over year.

Issue 6: Declining patrons rumours

- This is unknown as earlier figures were unreliable. The new integrated system has a 3 year automatic clean-up.
- The new integrated system also means that it is only one card per person/family instead of a card in Saskatoon, one for the lake, one while they attended SIAST in Moose Jaw, one under a maiden name, one under a married name. It is also a common practice in Saskatchewan to have a family card. With 100 books that can be signed out at one time, it is easy to pick up the latest Webb Griffin for the husband, 3 board books for the little ones, a romance for the wife, and a John Green book for the teen in the house – all at one time and generally on Mom's card.

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