

MARIGOLD LIBRARY SYSTEM
 Board of Management
Saturday, January 30, 2016
 Videoconference - Four Locations

ACADIA	Maxine Booker	Hanna	1	MARIGOLD STAFF IN ATTENDANCE	
ACME	Daniel Leronowich	Airdrie	2		
BANFF	Corrie DiManno	Airdrie	3	Michelle Toombs	Turner Valley
AIRDRIE	Kayla Jessen-White	Airdrie	4	Laura Taylor	Hanna
BIGHORN M.D.	Lynda Lyster	Turner Valley	5	Lynne Thorimbert	Airdrie
BLACK DIAMOND/TURNER VALLEY	Diane Osberg	Turner Valley	6	Jane Fisher	Strathmore
CANMORE	Judith Smith	Turner Valley	7	Richard Kenig	Hanna
CEREAL	Elaine Michaels	Hanna	8	Jessie Bach	Turner Valley
CHESTERMERE	Lennox Gomes	Strathmore	9	Nicole Talsma	Airdrie
COCHRANE	Susan Roper	Airdrie	10	Carlee Pilikowski	Strathmore
CROSSFIELD	Jo Tennant	Airdrie	11	Margaret Newton	Strathmore
DELIA	Barb Marshall	Hanna	12	Barb Froese	Strathmore
DRUMHELLER	Margaret Nielsen	Strathmore	13	Steven Copland	Strathmore
FOOTHILLS M.D.	Eleanor Chinnick	Turner Valley	14	Nora Ott (Recording)	Turner Valley
GHOST LAKE	Donna Bauer	Turner Valley	15	Alida Pituka	Strathmore
HUSSAR	Kristen Anderson	Strathmore	16	Caleigh Haworth	Hanna
ID #9	Ghada Wirth	Turner Valley	17		
KNEEHILL COUNTY	Glen Keiver	Airdrie	18	REGRETS WITH NOTICE	
LONGVIEW	Jan Dyck	Turner Valley	19	BEISEKER	Sharon King
MORRIN	Karen Neill	Hanna	20	CARBON	Guss Nash
OKOTOKS	Marian Walsh	Turner Valley	21	HANNA	Jerry Kruse
OYEN	Dennis Punter	Hanna	22	HIGH RIVER	Linda Schafer
ROCKYFORD	Gary Billings	Strathmore	23	KANANASKIS I.D.	Susan Billington
SPECIAL AREA # 2	Bob Gainer	Hanna	24	LINDEN	Wendy Marsh
SPECIAL AREA # 3	Helen Veno	Hanna	25	STANDARD	John Getz
STARLAND COUNTY	Lil Morrison	Hanna	26	TROCHU	Bill Cunningham
STRATHMORE	Denise Peterson	Strathmore	27		
THREE HILLS	Ron Howe	Airdrie	28	RREGRETS WITHOUT NOTICE	
WHEATLAND COUNTY	Berniece Bland	Strathmore	29	CONSORT	Dale Kroeger
				EMPRESS	Sheila Howe
				IRRICANA	Dennis Tracz
Hanna Municipal Library	Lynnette Kenrick	Hanna	1	MUNSON	Lyle Cawiezel
ALTA Representative	Lois Bedwell	Hanna	2	ROCKY VIEW COUNTY	Dimitri Dimopoulos
Sheep River Library Board	Mae Fisher	Turner Valley	3	SPECIAL AREA # 4	Lisa Vert
Chestermere Library Board	Shawna Biddles	Strathmore	4	WAIPAROUS	Sandra Barker

MINUTES

1. **CALL TO ORDER** - L. Lyster called the meeting to order at 9:30 am
Mayor Chris Warwick, gave greetings from the Town of Hanna. Mayor Warwick expressed his gratitude toward libraries because he believes libraries are responsible for the social and educational aspect of small communities and make smaller communities great.

- 1.1 Recognition of new Board members

L. Lyster welcomed two new Board Members:

- Corrie DiManno – Town of Banff
- Dimitri Dimopoulos – Rocky View County

There are currently 45 appointed Marigold Trustees and no vacancies.

- 1.2 Introduction of delegates, guests, and staff

- 1.2.1 Question during introduction – **“What book or movie have you enjoyed that you would recommend that everyone read or watch?”**

Recommended Books	Recommended Movies
Body in the Library - Christie	Rear Window
Sway - Standford	Atonement
Solomon Curse - Cussler	Shawshank Redemption*
The Enchanted - Denfeld	Big Fish
Anne of Green Gables - Montgomery	Christmas Carol
Fine Balance - Mistry	It's A Wonderful Life
Complicated Kindness - Toews	The Martian
Five Smooth Stones - Fairbairn	Inside Out
Alex Delaware novels by Jonathan Kellerman	Inception
Wild Rose - Butala	Princess Bride
Paying Guests - Waters	The Revenant*
Anything by Louis L'Amour (in Large Print)	Still Alice
The Martian - Weir	Water for Elephants
Dean Koontz novels	Blackfish
David Baldacci novels	Mad Max
Climate Change -Longhurst	Ghost
The Way of Kings -Sanderson	Magic Mike
Frankenstein - Shelley	Eastern Promises
The Revenant - Punte	Longest Ride
O'Dwyer Trilogy by Nora Roberts	Star Wars: The Force Awakens*
Still Alice - Genova	Wild
Water for Elephants - Gruen	Room
Beneath the Surface - Hargrove	Game of Thrones – HBO series
Jack Reacher series by Lee Child	The Code: series on TV or Netflix
Beyond the Pale - Urquhart	Death in Paradise – BBC series on PBS or Netflix
Girl on the Train - Hawkins	Casablanca
Listen to the squawking Chicken - Liu	Downton Abbey- BBC series on PBS
Black Like Me - Griffin	Philomena
Poles Apart - Fallis	Gone
Power of One - Courtenay	Holiday Inn
Wild - Strayed	White Christmas
All the Light We Cannot See - Doerr	
Game of Thrones - Martin	*recommended by several participants
Geography of Genius - Weiner	

“What book or movie have you enjoyed that you would recommend that everyone read or watch?”	
Books	Movies
Books by Agatha Christie and Patricia Wentworth	
Books on Leadership by John C. Maxwell	
Alex Cross series - Patterson	
We Should All Be Feminists -Adichie	
When Everything Feels Like the Movies - Reid	
Gone series - Grant	

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

MOTION: B. Bland/S. Roper -To approve the agenda	CARRIED
--	---------

3. MINUTES of the November 14, 2015 MEETING

MOTION: J. Dyck/K. Jessen-White -To accept the MINUTES of the November 14, 2015 meeting	CARRIED
---	---------

4. CONSENT AGENDA

4.1 Transfer of agenda items from consent agenda
 -There were no items transferred from the consent agenda

4.2 Motion to accept remaining consent agenda items

MOTION: K. Anderson/J. Smith -To approve agenda items 4.1 to 4.3	CARRIED
--	---------

DECISION

5.1 Financial

5.1.1 Marigold Financial Statements to December 31, 2015

MOTION: D. Peterson/E. Chinnick - That subject to audit, the Marigold financial statements to December 31, 2015 be accepted as presented, and filed for information	CARRIED
---	---------

5.1.2 RISE Financial Statements to December 31, 2015

MOTION: S. Roper/M. Walsh - That, subject to audit, the RISE Financial Statements to December 31 2015 be accepted as presented, and filed for information	CARRIED
---	---------

5.1.3 Marigold Operating Budget 2016 – 2018

MOTION: G. Billings/L. Morrison -To approve the Budget for 2016 and the projected budget for 2017 and 2018	CARRIED
--	---------

5.1.4 Marigold Capital/Projects Budget 2016

MOTION: G. Billings/ G. Wirth -To approve the Marigold Capital / Projects Budget for 2016	CARRIED
---	---------

5.2 Policies/Plans

5.2.1 Collection Management Schedule B – Materials Allocation 2016 – Standards & Services

MOTION: M. Booker
-To Approve Schedule B: Materials Allocation 2016 (Collection Management Policy)
CARRIED

5.2.2 Transfer Payments Policy – Standards and Services

MOTION: M. Booker
-To approve the Transfer Payments Policy
CARRIED

5.2.3 Schedule A – Services Grant 2016 (Transfer Payments Policy) – Standards & Services

MOTION: M. Booker
-To approve Schedule A: Services Grant 2016
CARRIED

5.2.4 Schedule B – Community Library Grant 2016 (Transfer Payments Policy) – Standards & Services

MOTION: M. Booker
-To approve Schedule B: Community Library Grant 2016
CARRIED

5.2.5 IT Capacity Fund Policy and 2016 Schedule A - Standards & Services

MOTION: M. Booker
-To approve IT Capacity Fund Policy and Schedule A: 2016 IT Capacity Fund Amounts
CARRIED

5.3 Communication Plan Discussion – Carlee Pilikowski

-The Communication Plan is underway and will:

- Support Vision 2018
- Align with organizational objectives
- Be flexible
- Use results of customer satisfaction surveys to get information and feedback
- Define the target audience
- Use positive and attainable communication strategies
- Be overseen by the Advocacy Committee

-Marigold will start searching for a graphic designer to create a new logo for Marigold

-Board members who are interested in the Communication Plan were asked to contact Carlee Pilikowski or Michelle Toombs

5. ITEMS FROM THE CONSENT AGENDA

-There were no items transferred from the consent agenda

6. INFORMATION

7.1 ALTA (Alberta Library Trustees Association) Report

-L. Bedwell presented her report. ALTA promotes effective library service and leadership via education, communication and advocacy; develops a comprehensive series of trustee education workshops and resources; and strives to ensure all library trustees can be effective and strong leaders within their communities.

L. Bedwell encouraged Marigold Board members to look at the ALTA website.

7.2 Marigold ALTA Representative and Alternate Nomination

-M. Booker has nominated Lois Bedwell to serve a second term as the Marigold ALTA representative. Susan Roper has put her name forward to act as the ALTA Alternate

7.3 Upcoming Board Meetings:

- Saturday, April 23, 2016 9:30am in Strathmore – Strathmore Alliance Church
- Saturday, August 20, 2016 9:30am – Canmore
- Saturday, November 19, 2016 9:30 am – Crossfield

7.4 Marigold Board Orientation

- Saturday, February 20, 2016 9:30 a.m. – Strathmore, Marigold Headquarters
- The Marigold Board Orientation is an opportunity to find out about how Marigold is structured including funding, committees and all of the partners including TRAC and TAL. Laura Taylor invited all Board Members to register for the orientation.

7.5 Customer Satisfaction Survey

- Laura Taylor discussed the highlights of the Customer Satisfaction Survey results. Marigold consultants, Nicole Talsma and Jane Fisher, led the preparation, distribution and collection of the second annual customer satisfaction survey. A total of 102 responses were received.
- As with the past year Marigold staff received the highest rating.
 - The survey was filled with suggestions for improvement and ideas for service enhancements. -
 - The management group will review the survey.
 - Using this same survey from year to year provides a framework for future comparisons. This year's survey will be used in many ways: Marigold's Communication Plan, Marigold's Annual Report, annual reporting to PLSB, Year End Review and more.

7.6 Highlights and Achievements of 2015

– Michelle Toombs presented information on the many accomplishments and achievements that took place throughout the System in 2015 including:

- Banff officially joined Marigold in January 2015; ID 9 in May
- High River returned to the refurbished Centennial Library
- Vision 2018
- Customer Satisfaction Survey
- Minecraft programming initiative
- Management Skills Training

Statistics:

- Marigold Cardholders ↑ 5%
- Items loaned to Marigold cardholders ↑ 14%
- loaned and borrowed between libraries ↑ 30%
- eBooks borrowed ↑ 15%
- 9,403 items checked out to MELibraries patrons
- 3.29 million items in the TRACpac online catalogue ↑ 3.4%
- 12,018,444 visits to online catalogue

Contributions to library development on a provincial scale:

- RISE programs had a broader reach with new partners, including Service Alberta
- Michelle a member of:
 - TAL Executive
 - President of TRAC
 - SAIT LIT (Library Information Technology) Advisory Council

System Headquarters Achievement's:

- Recruitment of new staff
- Driver Training and Marigold Fleet Safety & Maintenance Programs
- Health and Safety Training
- Roof Replacement

L. Lyster thanked M. Toombs and staff for an excellent year

7.7 Background Notes and Updates

– Michelle Toombs reminded Board members that libraries are a good investment in the community because they contribute to public safety, growing the economy and increasing personal income.

- Teens who use libraries stay out of trouble
- Library users increase the chances of obtaining a higher income
- Libraries grow literacy, literacy fights crime
- Libraries are safe spaces for entrepreneurs, and they grow the economy
- Libraries lead to successful job searches

-J. Getz and M. Toombs were invited to a meeting with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Danielle Larivee. It was a great opportunity to hear how committed she is to supporting public libraries in Alberta, and the hopes that she has for stable funding and how to fund infrastructure for HQ facilities.

- Other ideas that came forward during the discussion with Chairs and Directors included:

- Sustainable funding for regional library systems, including a northern or remote allowance
- Eliminating card fees
- Raising the minimum allotment for public library services from municipalities above \$2.00 per capita
- Provincial funding for service to aboriginal populations.
 - Premier Notley has asked Ministers to consider ways to help, taking into consideration the Truth and Reconciliation Report and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
 - An announcement is expected soon, perhaps at ALC in Jasper
 - A working group will be struck in the spring
 - PLSB is planning a symposium on this topic next year
 - PLSB will be gathering a list of best practices from Alberta and elsewhere

Marigold is hosting a meeting of all seven regional library system directors on February 23, where several Innovative Interfaces employees will be coming to do a demo of a product called Inn-reach. Inn-reach is a software platform that allows different library systems to integrate into a single catalogue to provide seamless access to patrons in real time and will allow patrons to directly place holds on holdings throughout the seven library systems. If all seven library systems agree to invest in this, it will make borrowing materials easier for patrons throughout Alberta. In the future, other library systems in Alberta and even other parts of Canada and the US may join.

TAL is also looking at Inn-reach to replace the TALonline system. Inn-reach is one of several products being evaluated. Richard is on the provincial committee formed by TAL to look at the suitability of Inn-reach for TAL members.

7.8 Information Sharing – Roundtable

L. Bedwell – Oyen

- Cereal, Oyen and Acadia Valley are forming a Friends Group
- The school library in Oyen is transitioning from a traditional library to a library commons
- Students and teachers like using Solaro

L. Kenrick - Hanna Library Board

- Hanna Municipal Library has a new interim library manager.
- Hanna library is looking to utilize its new space

D. Peterson – Strathmore

- Strathmore Public Library is experiencing increased use. More people are job searching and looking for employment improvements
- Strathmore Public Library is the backbone of the community

K. Anderson – Hussar

- Minecraft programming brought more activity to the library this summer. The library had 142 children in the Summer Reading Program

D. Osberg – Black Diamond and Turner Valley

- Teachers are really pleased with Solaro
- Sheep River Library has partnered with schools so that every student has a library card. As a direct result there has been an increase in the number of adult registrations as parents get cards when they bring their children to the library
- Sheep River Library will be celebrating its 5th anniversary in 2016. Over the years, program attendance has gone from 25 to over 1000 participants per month

7. BOOK DRAW & FREEDOM TO READ WEEK DISPLAY DRAW

Each location drew for a book and a Freedom to Read Display. The winners were:

Airdrie: Book Draw: “The Deep Cold Sea”– K. Jessen-White/Airdrie
Display: Ron Howe/Three Hills

Hanna Book Draw: “Beautiful Alberta” - L. Bedwell/ALTA Representative
Display: Barb Marshall/Delia

Strathmore Book Draw: “Hubble Cosmos” – L. Gomes/Chestermere
Display: K. Anderson/Hussar

Turner Valley Book Draw: “Canadian Pacific” – D. Bauer/Ghost Lake
Display: E. Chinnick/Foothills M.D.

8. ADJOURNMENT - L. Lyster declared the meeting adjourned at 12:20 pm

CEO

Board Chair

**Marigold Board Meeting
January 30, 2016 Background Notes**

1. Marigold and RISE Financials

Marigold Balance Sheet and Income Statement (unaudited) to December 31, 2015:

Balance Sheet: This snapshot to the end of December 2015 shows that Marigold is in a strong financial position.

Income Statement:

Marigold received more revenue than budgeted in 2015: + \$329,438. Most of this revenue was from Municipal Affairs as increased grants, funding for electronic resources and library system grant funding for Banff’s population. In March and again in May, we learned that provincial per capita grant rates would be increased \$ 0.10, and those rates would be multiplied by 2014 population (not 2010 population as expected). The pre-audit estimate for net operating income is \$531,957, but this amount will change when the audit is completed. When audit results are available at the AGM in April, excess revenue will be allocated to operating and capital reserves based on Board motion.

Budgeted expenditures were underspent by \$202,519 (4.4% of the total budget). The primary reasons for this were:

- 2015 was an exceptional year for staff vacancies. Seven staff departures resulted in 17 months of unfilled staff positions and unpaid salaries. Five recruits were hired in 2015 at lower starting wages, and had to wait three months for benefits. The combined salary and benefits budgets were underspent by 4.8%. On the other hand, Marigold hired another professional librarian consultant to its staff complement, and paid two temporary staff for member library programming support.
- The website platform replacement project was delayed until 2016. Also, IT staff were also unable to take the training they planned to take because of projects such as Banff and High River.
- PLSB paid Axia for all of Marigold's SuperNet charges, and they provided additional funding for Zinio and hoopla e-products.
- Savings were found by changing the venue in Strathmore for large meetings, including the Member Libraries Workshop and Library Leaders meetings.
- The presenter of the Performance Review Workshop did not charge anything.
- Shelf-ready cataloguing and supply purchases were minimized because the Banff conversion did not require as much as expected.
- Fuel savings and less maintenance on newer vehicles resulted in delivery cost savings.

Reasons for over-expenditures include:

- Foreign exchange: combined bank charges and foreign exchange is estimated to be 300% higher than 2014.
- Electronic resources: Marigold paid for a number of e-resources that PLSB paid for in the past, including Novelist and the TAL Core.
- Recruitment: Advertisements were placed in local papers and other places for seven postings in 2015.

A cause for celebration is the careful and successful expenditure of materials at 99% of the budget. Considering the size of the materials budget at \$991,270 and with about 50,000 individual items with varying publication cycles, this is a remarkable feat.

RISE Balance Sheet and Income Statement (unaudited) to December 30, 2015:

The RISE account currently has \$90,721 that has been set aside for service agreement payments on videoconferencing equipment that come due in June 2016. RISE has sent out invoices totaling \$92,000 for central site bridging support for 2016. Marigold will pay RISE \$38,000 (\$1,000 each) for central site support of videoconference equipment at member libraries and HQ. During the year, RISE will pay Marigold \$46,000 for salaries, Internet and administrative costs to manage the videoconferencing bridge.

Although RISE has received quotes from Allstream for the service agreements from RISE, there will be more negotiation in 2016. RISE and Marigold service agreements have two parts: 1) RISE (Marigold, Chinook Arch and Shortgrass) pays for the central site equipment service agreement quoted at \$151,032; and 2) Marigold pays for service agreements for the 38 VC units at each of our libraries including HQ, quoted at \$79,034.

Santa (Allstream) was good to RISE in 2015. The RISE bridge failed during the week before Christmas. Within a few days, the cause was identified as faulty equipment; the replacement equipment was ordered, shipped from Virginia, installed and tested; and the bridge was operational again thanks to great service from Allstream, Jaspreet and Richard. The equipment that failed was the most expensive piece of equipment in our RISE system; the MCU had been in use since 2008. Our service contract with Allstream covered equipment replacement, shipping, technical support and installation estimated at \$300,000. RISE paid \$113,000 in 2013 for 3 year service agreements on all the central site equipment, and last year, the content server was also replaced at no cost to RISE. If the MCU is under warranty for a year, we may be able to reduce the RISE service agreement total quoted at \$151,033

2. **Official Population:**

A notification on the website informs us that official population numbers will not be published by Municipal Affairs until the end of January. Last year, the population numbers arrived on January 30, just half a day before the Board meeting. There was a chaotic scramble to get all documents updated including Schedules and Budget, and then get them printed and distributed for Board members meeting at four different locations.

The role of official population in the calculation of per capita levy rates for municipal members is spelled out in the Marigold Agreement under the category of Financial as follows:

20. The population of a municipality that is a Party to this Agreement shall be deemed to be the population for the municipality published by the Department of Municipal Affairs for the fiscal year prior to the fiscal year in which the requisition is paid.

22. Each municipal library board in Marigold shall pay from its revenue to Marigold Board the annual per capita requisition as set out in Schedule C by October 31 in each year. The population served by a municipal board shall be that of the corresponding Party as determined in paragraph 20.

There are probably only four or five large municipalities which have recorded population growth in their own 2015 census. Most of Marigold's other member municipalities use federal census results that do not change for five years (2016 is a federal census year). It is unlikely that any municipality could have a lower population in 2015 than in 2014, but it is a possibility, entitling that municipality to a refund. It would not be prudent to rely on census information discovered through unofficial sources because of the way in which the Marigold Agreement is worded, and also because we are never sure what census numbers are reported to Municipal Affairs by that municipality.

At the Executive meeting on January 20, members agreed to the following actions:

- 1) If the official population numbers arrive before Wednesday, January 27 at 5 pm, Marigold will update the Schedules and the Budget for the Board meeting on January 30.
- 2) If we have reasonable assurance from PLSB that official population numbers will arrive before the middle of February, Marigold will delay sending out municipal levies until the middle of February.
- 3) If we are not sure when the population numbers will be published, Marigold will send out the levy invoices in early February after the 2016 budget is approved, and then will send out supplemental levy invoices to the few municipalities with population changes after Municipal Affairs publishes the population information.
- 4) The 2016 budget has municipal levy revenue calculated with 2015 population estimates. (Budgets are estimates)
- 5) 2016 Materials Allocation Schedule B has official population numbers from 2014. When official population for 2015 is published, this will be revisited and the Executive will motion the changes.
- 6) 2016 Services Grants Schedule has official population numbers from 2014. When official population for 2015 is published, this will also be revisited and the Executive will motion the changes.

3. Budget

Marigold's budget for 2016 is \$4,977,426 (7.9% above the Board-approved 2015 budget amount of \$4,609,705). This equals recent population growth in Marigold with new member municipalities and population growth surrounding Calgary.

Given the increased revenue in 2015, Marigold expects to receive more revenue from levies and from provincial grants in 2016 -- + \$379,221. \$362,000 will be used to cover increased costs for foreign exchange; TRAC, TAL and RISE levies; more collection materials for members; salaries & benefits for more staff members; increased service grants; and projects and capital costs. Therefore, the added revenue is being put to good use to directly deliver member services.

The primary considerations for the 2016 budget:

- There are increased costs to serve a larger population and more member libraries.
- Marigold has a new Strategic Plan (Vision 2018) which is both an extension of Vision 2015 and with new priorities.
- As Marigold's building ages, there are increased costs to maintain it, especially with the HVAC system for which we paid almost \$20,000 in 2015 for repairs.
- Foreign exchange has a significant impact on the budget, not only for payments to US Vendors (e.g., Polaris, Overdrive), but also because the cost of goods and services acquired in Canada will increase as well. (line 35)
- The TRAC levy has increased substantially from \$135,939 to \$156,000. This per capita levy is based on Marigold's 2014 population which increased 8% from 2013 population. Two other reasons for the levy increase include: 1) foreign exchange (Polaris and other digital products come from the US); and 2) license and product payments for Leap, Boopsie and Cloud Library (formerly 3M Cloud) come into effect in 2016. (line 75)
- RISE costs have been included in the 2016 budget (lines 56 and 76), totaling \$118,000.
- Along with all 49 TAL members, Marigold will begin paying for the TALonline (estimated at \$12,000 in 2016) which PLSB paid for the past three years. (line 79)
- Salary costs (+6.6%) include Step increases, COLA and wages for a new professional library consultant who was hired in 2015. Staff complement is 28 people, 25FTE. Marigold is also considering adding a part-time staff member to assist member libraries with programming initiatives. (line 107)
- Staff training, especially for IT staff, is needed in 2016 (line 110). It was skipped in 2015 because of other urgent projects.
- Marigold will continue to pay for e-resources that were paid for, or partially paid for, by PLSB, including the TAL Core, Novelist, Zinio and hoopla. (line 97)
- Marigold has increased the Community Library grants to \$6,660 to equal what Municipal Affairs pays municipal library boards in small communities. (line 124)
- Reimbursements are in and out, and difficult to estimate (lines 129 – 137). Reimbursement revenue and expenditures are equal on the budget. In the future after a discussion with the auditors, reimbursements might be removed from the budget.
- **Capital & Project Expenditures:** A separate budget was prepared to account for the amount on line 140 on the operational budget. We have chosen to call this budget capital and project expenditures because we are unsure what will be grouped together to be capitalized (or not) at a value greater than \$2,000 – that is up to our auditors. Included in this budget are: a van replacement; IT infrastructure on the Tech Plan; website development; HQ furniture replacement; basement room refurbishment; roof structure replacement; and HQ feasibility study.

4. **Minister of Municipal Affairs meeting**

Just before Christmas, Chairs and Directors of Alberta's 16 library systems were invited to meet with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, Danielle Larivee. Because Lynda Lyster is in Mexico, John Getz agreed to attend with me on Wednesday, January 13.

The day before the group meeting, John and I met with Bonnie Gray and Diana Davidson at PLSB to ask about library legislation and capital asset funding (money for a new building). The meeting was very helpful to clarify that it would be allowable in the legislation for a municipality or municipalities to borrow money on our behalf and then Marigold would pay back the loan with a special multi-year levy; however, Bonnie is hoping that the Ministry will recognize the value of library systems (which do the heavy lifting to sustain a vibrant public library network throughout Alberta) by providing some capital funding – no idea when. It is unlikely that the Alberta Libraries Act will be updated anytime soon and certainly not while the MGA is under review.

At the group meeting, attendees voiced messages that they felt were important for the Minister to hear, including:

- need to use current population figures when calculating provincial grants;
- more funding to cover escalating costs including minimum wage, e-content, enabling libraries to survive in rural areas, and continuing the good work towards excellence in public library service;
- elimination of service fees for public library memberships;
- service to 1st Nations and Metis residing on reserves and settlements, and everywhere else in the province;
- working more collaboratively with other GOA Departments such as Education and Advanced Education;
- increasing the minimum allotment above \$2.00 (this local appropriation limit was set in the 1980s to ensure that municipalities contributed enough money to be eligible for the provincial grant, and it hasn't been changed since);
- additional funding allowance for library systems serving northern and remote areas;
- and capital asset sustainability (John spoke about this)

Minister Larivee comes from the Slave Lake area. She worked at the library in her youth and served on boards; instructed at Northern Lakes College; dealt with the aftermath of the Slave Lake fire; and has been a public health nurse for 17 years. She was well versed in the value and impact of public libraries. I believe she was already well briefed on the issues and challenges facing libraries. Her comments included: recognition of current population on an ongoing basis; commitment to consistent, stable funding; operating grants not sufficient for capital projects -- she hopes to advocate for some capital funding; and she has ideas to serve aboriginal populations -- an announcement would be coming soon (maybe at ALC in Jasper which she plans to attend?). She emphasized the reality that the government is facing extreme restraint and there is an urgent need to stabilize the economy. She said "We'll get through this." "Services to Albertans can't change every time there is an oil downturn." "Libraries have a quality of life impact."

The most hopeful message from the Minister is that Municipal Affairs intends to resubmit the infrastructure requests to the Department of Infrastructure, and if that is not successful, the Minister will consider other funding options. About five years ago, it was determined that Marigold's portion of the infrastructure ask would be \$2.5M. Bonnie Gray mentioned that Marigold and Chinook Arch are the library systems with the most urgent needs.