



June 6, 2025

VIA EMAIL: lrobison@peacelibrarysystem.ab.ca

Peace Library System
8301 110 Street
Grande Prairie, AB T8W 6T2

Attention: Louisa Robison, CEO

Dear Ms. Robison,

Re: Updated Peace Library System Master Agreement

We are in receipt of your Board's letter enclosing an updated Peace Library System Master Agreement for consideration by Town Council and the membership as a whole.

First, we thank you and your team for their work in updating this Agreement, ensuring clarity and adding important clauses not previously captured in the original agreement. Your time and effort dedicated to this amendment is appreciated.

After reviewing the cover letter, we wish to address a slight misstatement regarding increases to PLS's annual levy. The letter suggests that the levy did not change between 2016 and 2023. However, the amending agreement updated in November 2014 clearly gives a 5% increase to the levies for the years 2014 through 2018.

Additionally, the rates applied under cover of PLS's June 2023 letter implemented increases for 2024 through 2026 contrary to the current Master Agreement and PLS Bylaws which state:

Current Master Agreement

17.1 This Agreement may be amended according to a motion for amendment passed by the Board. Such amendment shall be effective upon receipt by the Board of written notification from 2/3 of the Parties to this Agreement that they have so authorized such amendment. The Parties to this Agreement shall conform with such amendment upon notification from the Board that this paragraph has been fulfilled.

Peace Library System Procedural Bylaws

4.3.2 Setting Membership Fees

...Amendment of the fee schedule in the Master Agreement for Full Members requires receipt by the Board of written authorization from two-thirds of the Full Members.



As far as Administration is aware, no such authorization was sought or received. Nevertheless, a 5% levy increase was applied to the rates in 2024 and 2025 and are set to be implemented in 2026. Cumulatively, the 5% increases equate to 25% over 2015 rates during the period between 2016-2025 and is set to be 30% in 2026.

As for the proposed amendments to Schedule "B", we have concerns with adding the ability for the Board to unilaterally increase the annual levy by up to 5% year over year, indefinitely. This would mean that in a five-year period, PLS's levy could increase by 25%. In a time where municipalities are being asked to keep budget increases to a minimum, make cuts, and find spending efficiencies, the ability to increase rates by 5% without approval by the Parties is significant.

We of course recognize inflationary impacts, rising prices of goods, etc., on your budget, and appreciate your attempt to cut red tape and ease administrative burden by removing the need to seek approval of +/- 25 municipalities to implement needed levy increases to sustain optimal operations.

We suggest an amendment to schedule "B" that relates the levy increases to CPI. For example, enabling the Board to approve an increase equal to CPI up to a maximum of 3% per year with anything above requiring ratification by 2/3 of the membership. Such an increase better aligns with municipal budgetary practices, gives consideration to impacts on our budgets, and addresses concerns in relation to inflation, increased costs, and administrative burden in seeking ratification of members for annual increases.

We also note that any change to the Master Agreement with respect to how fee changes are implemented will need an accompanying amendment to PLS's Bylaws.

Thank you again for your time spent updating the Agreement and thank you for taking the time to consider our above-noted concerns.

Should you have any questions or wish to discuss this matter further, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B. Miller", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Barbara Miller, CPA, CGA, CLGM
Chief Administrative Officer
/kp

cc: Peace Library System Board Chair, Carolyn Kolebaba
Peace Library System Members