

October 22, 2022

Dear Mayor and Council;

The Library Board was disappointed to learn this week that the Board's 2023 budget request to Council was amended by City Administration without consultation or notice. In the draft City budget, Administration amended the Board's request (as approved and submitted in early July), reducing it by \$500,000. Making a change to the Board's submitted request prior to Council's formal budget deliberations marks a notable change in process and precedent.

Council appoints all members of the Library Board, all of whom take very seriously their fiduciary responsibility to the Library, including the important task of preparing an annual budget and funding request and presenting it to Council. Under the *Alberta Libraries Act*, the Board presents its request to Council and Council can "approve the estimate in whole or in part". Section 8 of the *Libraries Act* states:

- (1) The municipal board shall before December 1 in each year prepare a budget and an estimate of the money required during the ensuing fiscal year to operate and manage the municipal library.
- (2) The budget and the estimate of money shall be forthwith submitted to the council of the municipality.
- (3) Council may approve the estimate under subsection (1) in whole or in part.

In modifying the Board's budget request, City Administration contravened the Act which can be perceived as undermining the authority of the Board. We feel it is important that these actions be noted and brought to Council's attention to prevent a similar process error in future.

We look forward to presenting the Library's budget to Council in November and continuing to work with you in our shared desire to meet the needs of St Albertans as efficiently and effectively as possible.

Sincerely,

Colleen McClure & Deborah McTaggart-Baird
Co-Chairs-St. Albert Public Library