



AskAway Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, May 30, 2022
11:00 am – 12:30 pm (PT)
Virtual Meeting

In Attendance:

Ania Dymarz, Simon Fraser University
Lynette Gallant, North Island College, *Rural Colleges*
Aleteia Greenwood, University of British Columbia
Shannon Moist, Douglas College, *Member-at-Large*
Karen Munro, University of Victoria
Suzanne Rackover, Emily Carr University of Art + Design, *Small Universities* (Chair)
Debbie Schachter, Langara College, *Urban Colleges*
Derek Yap, Yukon University, *Teaching Universities & Technical Institutions*

AskAway Administrative Centre:

Anita Cocchia
Leah Hopton (Recorder)
Cristen Polley

Regrets:

Michel Castagné, Capilano University, *Member-at-Large*
Eva Gavaris, Okanagan College, *Member-at-Large*

1. Adoption of Agenda

S. Rackover welcomed committee members and shared a territorial acknowledgement. The agenda was adopted as presented. S. Rackover thanked the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Training for the bridge funding that was given to WriteAway and AskAway to bolster both services over the next two fiscal years.

2. Expenditure Plan 2022/23

A. Cocchia presented the 2022/23 AskAway Expenditure Plan.

Projected revenues for 2022/23 show no significant carryforward, BC ELN's contribution to the service of \$10,000, and the first allotment of bridge funding in the amount of \$15,000. The change in the expected partner library service fee total from the previous year – a slight increase – reflects the 2% increase to the Service Support Fee approved by the Advisory Committee. The total projected revenues for 2022/23 is \$124,000.

Projected expenditures for 2022/23 show that coordination and support costs remain relatively on par with the previous year. Auxiliary costs are expected to increase by approximately \$9,000 as institutions have returned to in-person library services and have less capacity to supply additional staffing to meet AskAway's traffic increase. The bridge funding is being used to keep the collaborative schedule well-staffed. There is \$1,000 budgeted for the Extenuating Circumstances Fund, \$1,000 for administration, communication, and governance, and \$16,000

for software and technology infrastructure. The total projected expenditures for 2022/23 is \$124,000.

D. Schachter noted the significance of what is accomplished for the province with AskAway's \$124,000 budget, particularly in relation to the discussion of an external review for the service (agenda item 6). She asked if there was a possibility of requesting ongoing funding from the Ministry for AskAway. A. Cocchia noted that there is keen interest in and support for AskAway's collaborative model amongst Ministry representatives, and while securing ongoing funding for services is challenging, there may be future opportunities for one-time funding.

MOTION: To approve the 2022/23 Expenditure Plan.

Moved: A. Greenwood

Seconded: D. Yap

Motion carried unanimously.

3. Action Planning

C. Polley presented an update on progress towards completing AskAway action items that were identified as priorities by the Advisory Committee in late 2017. Since that time, most of the items have been completed, with a few ongoing.

To inform future action planning by the Advisory Committee, the Administrative Centre will gather information on what is currently happening with the service, member libraries, and students. A User Experience Working Group, made-up of service providers and local coordinators, is being formed to leverage the expertise in the community and better understand student needs.

The information gathering will be bolstered by data that has already been collected by BC ELN as well as by AskAway member libraries (e.g., the 2020/21 Reference Services survey conducted by S. Moist and sent to AskAway coordinators to learn how libraries provide reference services via chat, online appointments, video reference, and more).

A. Greenwood noted this information gathering would align with the type of information needed to inform an external review. D. Schachter asked when and how often this information is gathered. C. Polley responded that in the past, information gathering to inform action planning has followed strategic planning work of BC ELN. The Administrative Centre plans to do this work through the summer and into the fall when staff are back from vacation.

4. Proactive Chat Update

C. Polley provided an update on the proactive chat feature that was piloted last year and is now being implemented more broadly. In March 2022, all participating libraries were surveyed as to their interest in implementing proactive chat at their institutions this summer. In addition to three sites that have continued to offer proactive chat since their involvement in the pilot (Alexander College, the University of British Columbia, and the University of Northern BC), four sites will launch in Section 3 (May-Jun) 2022: Kwantlen Polytechnic University, North Island College, Okanagan College, and Yukon University. Two additional sites, the BC Institute of Technology and Simon Fraser University, will potentially launch in Section 4 (Jul-Aug). The Administrative Centre will conduct another survey to gauge further institutional interest in late summer/early fall.

5. Service Update

C. Polley provided the committee with a service update. Service provider training has changed since the onset of the pandemic and in response to feedback from the community. Training is now online, and is offered in two parts: an asynchronous Canvas course and a live session for hands-on practice. Early feedback has been positive. Local coordinators met in April. They discussed Campfire, the group chat service providers use to communicate with one another on shift, and the possibility of exploring LibraryH3lp's built-in backchat; the Administrative Centre will investigate. A small group of coordinators will be reviewing the Citation Best Practices Appendix. Coordinators will meet again this fall. BC ELN has hired a student librarian for the summer to staff AskAway and provide support for operations.

6. External Review Recommendation

K. Munro presented a document titled "Recommendation: External Review of AskAway", submitted to the Advisory Committee on behalf of the University of Victoria, Simon Fraser University, and the University of British Columbia.

The Advisory Committee discussed the recommendation at length. Several members raised questions pertaining to scope, timing, and potential reviewers. Committee members also questioned the broader impact on BC ELN. The committee concluded it did not have sufficient information to make the decision to approve or decline the recommendation at this point in time. A recommendation was put forward that the Advisory Committee seek the input of the Steering Committee.

MOTION: I move that we forward the recommendation to the BC ELN Steering Committee with the notes of our discussion today.

Moved: D. Schachter

Seconded: A. Dymarz

Motion carried unanimously.

7. New Business

There was no new business.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting will take place in the fall. The Administrative Centre will send out a doodle poll to select a date.