

**ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT**

**RE: Winnipeg Public Library Board Annual Report 2008**

**FOR SUBMISSION TO: The Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services**

**ORIGINAL REPORT SIGNED BY: Vernon DePape, Chairperson  
Winnipeg Public Library Board**

**REPORT DATE: April 8, 2009**

**RECOMMENDATION(S):**  
That this report be received as information.

**REPORT SUMMARY:**

Key Issues:

- Winnipeg Public Library Board is required to present an annual report to the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services.
- Winnipeg Public Library Board established three key priorities for 2008:
  - 1 Funding advocacy
  - 2 Literacy advocacy
  - 3 Community outreach

**Implications of the Recommendations:**

**General implications:**

**None**  
**For the organization**  
**For the community and/or organizations external to the Library Board**

**Policy implications:**

**No**  
**Yes**

**Comment:**

**Environmental implications:**

**No**  
**Yes**

**Comment:**

**Human Resources implications:**

X    No  
       Yes

**Comment:**

**Financial implications:**

X    **Within approved current and/or capital budget**  
       **Current and/or capital budget adjustment required**

**Comment:**

**REASON FOR THE REPORT:**

As mandated in The City of Winnipeg By-Law No. 119 / 2004, The Winnipeg Public Library Board's duties include reporting annually to the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services regarding the Board's activities.

**HISTORY:**

In February 2008 The Winnipeg Public Library Board (WPLB) presented its 2007 annual report.

**► Priorities**

The Board's key priorities for 2008 were: (1) continued advocacy for increased Provincial funding for Winnipeg's public libraries, as recommended in the Province's Public Library Review report; (2) literacy advocacy; and (3) ongoing community outreach.

**1. Advocacy**

To be a strong advocate for Winnipeg Public Library is one of the Board's strategic directions.

**Provincial Funding and Partnerships**

Three of the 20 recommendations contained in the Province's report, *Reaching Our Vision: Providing High Quality, Sustainable Public Library Services for All Manitobans*, released in January 2007, have financial implications for Winnipeg Public Library: the establishment of a funding mechanism that would address current trends in population and operating costs; the extension of an annual collection development grant that would, for the first time, include Winnipeg Public Library's branches; and the provision of an annual technology maintenance grant to each library branch including Winnipeg Public Library.

In January 2008 City Council adopted a motion to call upon the Province to give favourable consideration to these three recommendations. The Board was subsequently pleased to learn that the Province forwarded \$115,500 in one-time support to Winnipeg

Public Library for collection development, and a \$100,000 new ongoing grant from the Building Manitoba Fund to update technologies. We are grateful to City Council for its support in obtaining this funding, which is in addition to the Province's annual grant of \$1.9 million.

The Province also contributed funds toward eLibraries Manitoba, a joint project with Winnipeg Public Library to provide downloadable e-books and audio books, and two month's salary to extend Winnipeg Public Library's Writer-in-Residence program Province-wide.

With grant support from the Province, the Library Board sponsored the Canadian Urban Libraries' Council reception in October at Dalnavert Museum. Head Librarians from over 30 large public libraries mingled with Winnipeg Public Library administrators and our Library Board members. This event provided an invaluable opportunity to discuss issues, challenges and successes with colleagues from across the country.

The Board congratulates Trevor Surgenor on his appointment as Director of Manitoba's Public Library Services. The Board particularly appreciates his valuable contribution as a member of Winnipeg Public Library Board and his leadership in the development of public library services across the province.

### **City's 2008 operating budget**

In March, Chair Sandy Hyman appeared before the Standing Policy Committee on Protection and Community Services and Executive Policy Committee to convey our concern that the Library's Technology Reserve Fund was being reduced by about \$680,000 and the long term impact of that cut. We pointed out the importance and uses of this fund. We were disappointed to learn that the reduction was not reversed, but was pleased that the cut was for one year only.

Board representatives were pleased to meet in October with the Mayor's Executive Assistant, along with the Director of Community Services and the Manager of Library Services. Participants shared information on topics such as the current status of library collection needs, and improvements made to library collection development as a result of the recommendations made in a 2007 study that the Library Board commissioned, *Winnipeg Public Library Materials Selection Process Study*. <http://wpl.winnipeg.ca/library/contact/boardimages/matsselectionprocessstudy.final2007-09-13.pdf>. Board officials also noted that further research is needed to address library service to the City's growing Aboriginal population. That led into a discussion of the Library Board's budget, and the need for a grant increase to fund a study on Aboriginal library service needs, to determine how best to address them. In this way, the public library can be a key partner with the City, to enhance the range of services, including literacy, available to the Aboriginal community.

### **2. Literacy**

In April, members of the Library Board and Library Administration attended the Pan-Canadian Literacy Forum. Using web casting to connect 10 sites across the country, the

Forum provided the opportunity for the approximately 3,500 participants to hear from prominent Canadians on literacy issues. (The webcasts are available at <http://cmec.insinc.com/literacyforum/>.) The theme of Manitoba's site, at the Winnipeg Convention Centre, was Literacy Works – Building a Skilled and Resilient Workforce. The event also provided the opportunity for sharing and networking.

To address the adult literacy challenge in Manitoba, the Government passed The Adult Literacy Act, to take effect January 2009. The Act requires the development of an adult literacy strategy. At the Province's adult literacy strategy forum in July, Past Library Board Chair Sandy Hyman, along with other literacy advocates and practitioners, presented a brief that stressed the wide range of roles that public libraries play in literacy, and cited examples of the types of programs and community partnerships that both Winnipeg Public Library and the Library Board have developed. In November, the Province issued a report on the consultation with implicit recommendations for the development of its adult literacy strategy. The Board hopes this strategy will lead to new partnerships between literacy providers and libraries. Public libraries have key roles to play in education and literacy, from early childhood literacy to adults to new Canadians.

### **3. Community Outreach**

Another of the Library Board's strategic directions is to support Winnipeg Public Library's role in contributing to the social and economic well-being of our city.

One of the Board's related goals is to assist the library in its outreach to diverse populations. The **Jack Montgomery Community Outreach Award**, named in memory of former Library Board member, Crown Counsel and author Jack Montgomery is given annually to library staff to implement a program that will encourage library use by citizens from the community who may not be regular users of the library. Targeting Newcomers whose first language is not English, the \$5,000 grant will fund the development of library orientation materials in photo and plain language format, along with lesson plans for use by instructors of English-as-an-Additional Language.

The Board's Community Outreach Committee **Language and Literacy grants program**, established in 2006 to assist community groups in developing language and literacy initiatives in partnership with one or more branches of Winnipeg Public Library, in 2008 awarded four \$500 grants.

- Lord Nelson School partnered with Sir William Stephenson Library to provide Tagalog-English materials and related programming to meet the needs of Filipino families living in the area.
- Fort Richmond Collegiate, in partnership with Fort Garry Library, implemented a promotional campaign to inform high school students about the public library's online databases as well as audio books and eBooks from the eLibraries Manitoba website.

- Frontier College, a literacy training agency, in partnership with Millennium Library Children's and Youth Services staff, initiated a weekly evening Homework Club designed to match volunteer tutors with children and youth for literacy-based activities and homework assistance.
- Victoria-Albert School, in partnership with Millennium Library's Children's Services staff, promoted the parent and child reading experience particularly to newcomers.

#### **4. Recruitment and Education**

##### **Recruitment**

Despite its expanded recruitment effort, the Library Board continues to seek applications to fill Library Advisory Committee vacancies.

##### **Education**

The Library Board held one formal and several informal orientation sessions for new Board and Library Advisory Committee members.

Major national conferences provide the opportunity for ongoing learning and networking with other library trustees. The Board sent a representative to each of two annual conferences: the Ontario Library Association mid-winter Super Conference in Toronto, with an attendance of over 4,500; and the Canadian Library Association conference in Vancouver.

The Canadian Library Association conference provided a great opportunity for networking with members of the Canadian Library Trustees Association to learn how other library trustees provide support to their library systems. Conference seminars of particular value were those that targeted library advocacy.

At the Ontario Library Association conference, especially useful sessions were on advocacy, the evaluation of library board effectiveness, adult literacy, and First Nations library programming.

#### **5. The Winnipeg Library Foundation**

The Board is mandated to “establish, organize or participate in coordinating donations and fund raising programs for the benefit of the Library system”. The Board continues to support the Foundation in its fundraising initiatives to support libraries. The Foundation has contributed almost \$7 million to the Millennium Library project, and has also been working on other projects. An example is the Adapted Books Collection, a project which the Foundation facilitated, in partnership with the Winnipeg Foundation's Literacy for Life Fund, the Rehabilitation Centre for Children, and Winnipeg Public Library. After obtaining copyright clearance, staff of the Rehabilitation Centre added symbols to selected books, so that children with exceptional learning needs, and who cannot read or verbalize printed text, can share and enjoy favourite titles with family and friends.

For several years the Foundation has been working with the Chinese Consulate. As part of a three-year project, in 2008 the first shipment of donated materials arrived from China. The collection of books and audio-visual materials was officially launched in October 2008 at the Millennium Library by Dr. Joseph Du, Winnipeg Chinese Cultural and Community Centre, the Consul-General for the Consulate General of the People's Republic of China in Toronto and Mr. Rick Walker, Manager, Library Services, Winnipeg Public Library.

## **6. Other Activities**

Board and Library representatives were invited to the City's Leadership Forum on Crime Prevention which was held in November with approximately 80 invitees attending. More forums were planned with a focus on community development and crime prevention.

A Winnipeg Public Library Board representative sits on the Manitoba Library Trustees Association, and regularly provides input to the Canadian Library Trustees Association.

The Board also supported the Library and related groups, for example, by participating in the selection of the library staff customer service award winners, supporting the Writer-in-Residence program, and attending library launches.

### **Library Advisory Committees (LACs)**

As mandated by the City's Library Board By-law, the Board is responsible for the five Library Advisory Committees (LACs), whose role is to advise the Board on library service within their communities.

LAC members provided a very useful service to the Library system by conducting a magazine survey at all library branches between October and December. The brief survey was designed to help Library administrators determine the level of satisfaction with current magazine subscriptions: titles, loan period and shelf arrangement (alphabetical or by subject). Community Services Department staff tabulated the results which will be available in 2009.

The Lord Selkirk-West Kildonan Library Advisory Committee made a presentation to the Standing Policy Committee on Infrastructure Renewal and Public Works, advocating for a median cut or other improved access to the Sir William Stephenson Library from Keewatin.

Assiniboia Library Advisory Committee members participated in the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the St. James-Assiniboia Library on October 11, by hosting a tea party at which visitors were invited to sample teas of different nations.

## **7. Acknowledgements**

Winnipeg Public Library Board congratulates the design architects of the Millennium Library project, David Kressock of LM Architectural Group (Winnipeg) and John Patkau of Patkau Architects (Vancouver), recipients of the prestigious Governor General's Medal in Architecture for 2008.

In closing, the Library Board would like to acknowledge and thank the following:

- Standing Committee members for their ongoing commitment to Winnipeg Public Library;
- Library Advisory Committees for their dedication to their community libraries;
- Past Chair Sandy Hyman, for her leadership in library advocacy and commitment to our 2008 priorities;
- Clive Wightman, Director of Community Services, for his support of library services;
- Library Administration and the dedicated team of staff for their service excellence and innovation;
- Heather Graham, Administrative Assistant to the Board, whose assistance is integral and invaluable.

### **FINANCIAL IMPACT STATEMENT:**

Winnipeg Public Library Board's 2008 Audited Financial Statement is attached.

### **IN PREPARING THIS REPORT THERE WAS CONSULTATION WITH, AND CONCURRENCY BY:**

The members of The Winnipeg Public Library Board

### **THIS REPORT SUBMITTED BY:**

**Winnipeg Public Library Board**

### **Prepared by:**

**Heather Graham, Administrative Assistant**

**Vernon DePape, Chair, and the members of the Winnipeg Public Library Board**