



Report to Members

David Allen, CEO

November 2012

This report highlights FOPL's activities over the past four months.

OISE's Report on Outcomes of Preschool Literacy Programs

OISE's report on outcomes of public library preschool literacy programs was presented to and approved by FOPL's Board of Directors. OISE identified school readiness, motivation to read and teaching parents how to engage their children with books at home as key strengths of those programs. The final report was distributed to FOPL members and Ministers of Education, Children & Youth and Tourism, Culture & Sport. A media release was issued. OISE's article was submitted for peer review to *Partnership: the Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research*. The editors of *Partnership* have approved OISE's article for publication in an upcoming issue. OISE researchers are lined up to present their findings at the OLA Super Conference. Other speaking engagements are being sought.

Effective November 30, 2012, under the terms of FOPL's agreement with OISE, members are permitted to distribute to the public both OISE's full report and the article OISE submitted for peer reviewed publication, in their entirety.

Letters of Support for NAPLO's Funding Proposal

In response to the funding proposal to John Duncan, Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, which FOPL drafted on behalf of the National Aboriginal Public Library Organization (NAPLO), strong letters of support were received from MP Rob Clarke, Chair of the Conservative Aboriginal Caucus and Shawn Atleo, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations.

Survey of CIIF Applications with Municipal Support

At the request of many members, FOPL conducted a quick survey to gauge how successful public libraries were in getting support from their municipalities when applying for grants from the Community Infrastructure Improvement Fund (CIIF). Although only 36 responses were received, the survey revealed some interesting information.

- Only 36.1% of respondents submitted an application to CIIF.

- 53.3% of those who applied received support from their municipality.
- For the most part, the 46.7% who did not receive municipal support for their application, lost out in favour of projects related to parks and recreation, and roads.
- Four respondents submitted applications directly to CIIF, not through their municipality.

PLOG Proposal Updated and Resubmitted

Using 2011 Census and CPI figures, FOPL updated its proposal to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to increase the funding envelope and distribution model for Public Library Operating Grants (PLOGs). On November 14, 2012, FOPL resubmitted a proposal that now asks for the funding envelope to increase from \$18.7 million to \$50.9 million, implemented over 5 years as follows:

YEAR	Total Funding Envelope	Per Capita Rate	Rural and Northern Supplements (each)	Minimum	Fixed Amount	# of Grandfathered Libraries
0	\$ 18,707,240	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	387
1	\$ 25,190,496	\$ 1.81	\$ 3,000	\$ 3,000	\$ -	61
2	\$ 31,545,896	\$ 2.31	\$ 3,900	\$ 3,900	\$ -	23
3	\$ 38,006,532	\$ 2.79	\$ 4,800	\$ 4,800	\$ -	11
4	\$ 44,525,585	\$ 3.27	\$ 5,700	\$ 5,700	\$ -	8
5	\$ 50,921,978	\$ 3.74	\$ 6,600	\$ 6,600	\$ -	6

Other Advocacy

Other miscellaneous advocacy efforts by FOPL included:

- Meeting with Kevin Finnerty, new Assistant Deputy Minister of the Culture Division with MTCS to discuss all of FOPL's key advocacy issues.
- Meeting with Glen Murray, former Minister of Training, Colleges & Universities to discuss the research studies FOPL commissioned on public library literacy programs.
- Sending a letter of thanks to MTCS for extending the funding of e-resources through SOLS.
- Writing library organizations in other provinces, encouraging them to undertake capital needs analyses similar to FOPL's.
- Writing all candidates in the election for National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, held July 18, 2012.
- Writing all candidates in the Ontario by-elections in Kitchener-Waterloo and Vaughan, held September 6, 2012.

Strategic Decisions by FOPL's Board

FOPL relies almost exclusively on membership fees for operating revenue. In an effort to ensure FOPL's limited resources are focused on member priorities and to ensure FOPL's ongoing financial viability, the Board of Directors recently made the following decisions:

- Concentrate on advocacy and evidence-based research. Undertake member consultation to identify current issues and priority projects.
- Pursue charitable registration.
- Transfer responsibility for the Accreditation Council back to OLS-North.
- Transfer responsibility for Ontario Public Library Week back to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport.
- Discontinue being exhibitors at AMO and AMCTO conferences, for the time being.
- Redeploy staff, accordingly.

The next few sections of this report describe our progress in each of these areas.

Updating FOPL's Advocacy Plan

It has been three years since FOPL's current Advocacy Plan was approved. Much has been accomplished in those three years. FOPL's efforts have raised awareness among funders of the relevance of public library services and how those services have changed significantly in response to the new needs of users. Additionally, our supporting research has helped build our case for support.

However, the economic and political landscape has changed. We are in the midst of a slow economy and huge government debt, which has meant little additional funding for Ontario public libraries. In terms of provincial funding, we can take some comfort in the fact that it has been maintained for public libraries, while for other sectors it has been reduced. But our sector's reliance on municipal funding continues to increase, which has resulted in wider variation in service levels from one municipality to another. It is timely to revisit FOPL's advocacy priorities and perhaps our methods for addressing them.

The FOPL Board has approved a process for updating our Advocacy Plan. After conducting an environmental scan, FOPL's Advocacy Task Force drafted an outline for our updated Advocacy Plan, which the FOPL Board is now reviewing. As the Advocacy Plan is being fleshed out, feedback will be sought from FOPL members on various drafts during two rounds of consultations, one in December 2012 and another in May 2013. The FOPL Board hopes to give final approval to the updated Advocacy Plan in June 2013.

UWO's Research on Societal Value of Public Libraries

FOPL is partnering with OLA, AMPLO and researcher Bill Irwin from the University of Western Ontario in a major study to measure the value of Ontario public libraries. The study will not measure economic benefit or ROI. Rather, it will concentrate on measuring societal value (ie. why public

libraries exist and how we know they are achieving what was intended). The nature of Bill's proposed study will be similar to the one being done in the Netherlands, as described in the linked article presented at the 2012 IFLA Conference.

(<http://conference.ifla.org/sites/default/files/files/papers/wlic2012/76-huysmans-en.pdf>)

Bill's project will likely have a budget of \$750,000 over a five-year period. Bill expects Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) and Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) to be principal funders. Because of its charitable status, OLA will serve as the lead agency through which all funding and expenses flow.

FOPL has designated Donna Bright, Chair of our Research Task Force to sit on the Project Steering Committee. Although FOPL cannot afford to contribute funding to the project, we have committed to allocating staff time equivalent to 0.1 FTE. This project is congruent with our strategic priority to undertake evidence based research with a focus on outcomes measurement in order to support our advocacy agenda.

Application for Charitable Registration

On October 1, 2012 FOPL submitted an application for charitable registration to Canada Revenue Agency (CRA). If the application is successful, more opportunities for foundation and corporate support could be available to FOPL. However, according to CRA's criteria for charitable status, it is not obvious that FOPL meets the requirements. In all of Ontario, only a handful of organizations such as FOPL (ie. an association of organizations, which has a focus on advocacy and does not provide direct services to the public) are registered with CRA. It could be many months before CRA makes a decision.

Transfer of Accreditation Responsibility

Responsibility for the Accreditation Council has been transferred to OLS-North. An agreement with OLS-North was signed on November 7, 2012, and the transfer was effective that date.

Launch of OPLW

The official launch of Ontario Public Library Week (OPLW) occurred on Friday, October 12, 2012 at Port Hope Public Library. Port Hope Public Library Board Chair Greg Burns served as Master of Ceremonies. Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism, Culture & Sport was the special guest speaker. FOPL Board Chair Jim Bennett also spoke and introduced the Minister. The launch was an effective and well attended event that raised public awareness of the value of public libraries.

During Minister Chan's remarks, he named the short list nominees for both the Angus Mowat Award for Excellence and the Minister's Award for Innovation. Winners of the awards will be announced at the Public Library Awards Dinner on January 31, 2013 during the OLA Super Conference.

The Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport was informed that FOPL will no longer coordinate OPLW, effective in 2013.

Highlights of AMO Conference

FOPL was an exhibitor at the AMO conference for the 7th consecutive year. This year the event took place in Ottawa. Jim Bennett and David Allen staffed the exhibit booth, along with several managers from Ottawa Public Library who generously volunteered their time. During the conference, Jim and David had meetings with MPP Bill Mauro, Parliamentary Assistant for the Ministry of Northern Development and Mines, Ted McMeekin, Minister of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs, and Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism, Culture & Sport.

FOPL still plans to attend future AMO conferences in order to meet with various provincial ministers. However, in 2013 FOPL will not be an exhibitor.

Resignation of Erin Menzies

Erin Menzies resigned from her position as Librarian – Administrative Assistant. She accepted a position as Research Analyst with Clinical Trials Ontario. Her last work day at FOPL was October 11, 2012. Erin made a significant contribution to FOPL during her two years with us.

Hiring of Susie Benes

Susie Benes joined FOPL as our new Part-time Administrative Assistant on November 5, 2012. Susie has an impressive background. She previously served as Executive Assistant for the luxury design firm Artel Glass, as Library Technician for the Masaryk Memorial Institute, and Chair of the Board of Directors for the Scarborough Campus Students' Union. In addition to her administrative expertise, Susie possesses excellent computer skills and has a wealth of experience in database management, website development and social media. Susie's regular days in the Federation office will be Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays. She can be contacted at 416-395-5638 or sbenes@fopl.ca.

Workshop to Develop a Provincial Library Strategy

On the recommendation of Glen Murray, former Minister of Training Colleges & Universities, FOPL explored the possibility of organizing an inter-ministerial workshop that would address the need for a provincial library strategy, perhaps during the OLA Super Conference. FOPL provided OLA with a proposed outline for the workshop, which was forwarded to the Ministry of Tourism, Culture & Sport (MTCS). Due to time constraints, both in terms of scheduling and preparation, OLA and MTCS have decided to scale back the scope of the workshop. One 75-minute session of the Super Conference will be allocated to identifying existing and potential opportunities for other ministries to utilize public library services. Deputy Minister Steven Davidson has distributed a questionnaire to his peers in other ministries in order to gather this information. The results of his survey will be shared at the Super Conference session. Based on these results, FOPL and MTCS can determine if and how a workshop on a larger scale should be organized.

Update on Province-wide Branding Initiative

The Libraries 2020 Project led by OLS-North identified FOPL as taking a leadership role in a collaborative process of determining the scope of the Library Branding and Promotion Initiative. SOLS and OLS-North have \$100,000 in unspent monies from their \$15 million grant that could be used toward the scoping work. In July, FOPL submitted to OLS-North an outline of how we would like the province-wide branding initiative to unfold, and how we envision FOPL's project management role. No response from OLS-North has yet been received.

CNIB's HUB Proposal

Following a meeting with representatives of CNIB to discuss their Partners Program and proposed National Digital HUB, FOPL sent a letter in support of those two services. Both services are critical to helping public libraries meet the upcoming Accessible Information and Communications Standard requirement, as part of the AODA legislation.

Presentations to Trustee Councils

On November 3rd and 10th, FOPL staff gave presentations to Trustee Councils #7 in Renfrew and #5 in Port Hope, respectively. At both meetings, many trustees expressed appreciation for the work FOPL is doing.

AGM Preparations

The 90-Day Notice for the Annual General Meeting was issued to FOPL members on October 30, 2012 in both official languages. The notice included details on the proposed Bylaw amendments that were approved by the Board of Directors in September.

On November 1, 2012 CEOs of all member libraries were mailed invoices for 2013 membership fees, due January 15, 2013. The fees now reflect populations served according to the 2011 Census. Also on November 1st, the CEOs and board chairs of all non member libraries were sent invitations to join FOPL. Included in all mailings was a list of FOPL's key accomplishments over the past year.