

**FOPL CHAIR REPORT**

**Subject: FOPL Chair Report**

**Date: Dec. 31, 2017**

**Prepared by: Julia Merritt, Chair, FOPL; CEO, Stratford Public Library**

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2017 has been a busy and successful year for FOPL.

The Executive Director began to implement the Board’s new Strategic Plan, and combined with the groundwork that has been laid in the last several years, 2017 has been highly successful.

Among the major successes, we note:

1. Addressing the community’s needs with respect to the Ministry of Culture’s Public Library Program Funding Review. FOPL has worked with many library sector partners to be able to craft unified positions on the major issues, and the Ministry has regularly consulted with FOPL during the entire process. In partnership with OLA, FOPL has also hired a professional lobbying form, Counsel Public Relations, and they are proving invaluable. In the short term, FOPL has help to contribute to funding successes including CELA, Connectivity Grants, and additional broadband funding.
2. The FOPL office operations have been modernized and re-staffed. With our largest membership base ever, FOPL has a new Administrative Assistant and has transferred financial and other operational activities from Toronto Public Library to FOPL directly.
3. Managing the statistics and marketing projects. The Open Media Desk project is successfully changing the marketing culture of Ontario public libraries and providing a framework to influence our public and the government. Excitingly we have the majority of libraries covered as measured by population impact. FOPL also released the “One Voice for Ontario’s Public Libraries” tagline “A Visit Will Get You Thinking” and released the updated Ontario Public Library Statistics Report to all members in Jan. 2017, only months after the 2015 data release.
4. Working closely with our partners to ensure that we are “One Voice for Ontario’s Public Libraries”. FOPL has worked with all of SOLS, OLS-North, OLA, OPLA, OLBA, CULC, AMPLO, ARUPLO, CELUPL and more to create discussion papers around Culture, Community Hubs, Municipal Act, the PLPFR, and to organize the Library Day at Queen’s Park. FOPL is supporting First Nations libraries with national and provincial advocacy as we are able, including statistical data and making sure every FN library is a member of FOPL.

These and other successes are indicators of the very real impact that FOPL is having on creating a sustainable future for Ontario’s public libraries. I offer my sincere thanks to my fellow board members and the FOPL staff for a great Federation year. The FOPL Board looks forward to being able to represent the library community’s interests in 2018 and beyond!