

## Chair's 2025 AGM Report

**Report to:** The FOPL Board and Members  
**Prepared by:** Paul Ainslie  
**Prepared on:** April 4, 2025

### Recommendation

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**THAT the FOPL board and members receive this report as information.**

### Report

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Dear FOPL Board Members,

Another year has gone by.... too quickly it seems....and we are having an Annual General Meeting!

I want to begin by thanking all of the Board Members for their time and dedication to making FOPL stronger than ever!

My sincerest gratitude to Dina for all of her tireless efforts, along with Diana's support in ensuring the work of FOPL remains on everyone's radar screen....and comes to the attention of others who often seem to take our public library system for granted.

Wearing my other "hat", as a Toronto City Councillor I heard from the Mayors, Councillors, M.P.P.s, M.P.s, librarians, and residents of their interactions with FOPL; whether it's at the Rural Ontario Municipal Association (ROMA), Ontario Municipal Association (AMO), Federation of Ontario Municipalities (FCM), OLA's Super Conference, Ontario Good Roads Association (Good Roads), or at Provincial Standing Deputations across Ontario.

This increased awareness is only made possible by a Board of Directors, and our staff who believe so strongly in the core mission of our public library systems across Ontario. We have all collectively deputed at Standing Committees, attended conferences, and staffed our booth at those conferences.



Our efforts led to successes last year including increased funding for First Nations Public Libraries and an increase to the Connectivity Grant. An additional investment of \$1.25 million per year for a total of \$3.75 million over three years will be allocated through the First Nations Salary Supplement and Provincial Libraries Operating Grant, an increase of almost 300% of what these libraries are currently receiving. The Internet Connectivity Grant received a boost of \$122,000 to assist rural, northern, and First Nations libraries in maintaining reliable internet.

Our message resonates with everyone about the role public libraries play in our society:

1. They offer free educational resources to everyone.
2. Libraries are safe refuges for the homeless and underserved populations.
3. They help boost local economies.
4. Libraries make communities healthier.
5. They preserve history, and more importantly, truth.
6. Libraries help connect communities.

I look forward to another exciting year! We will continue to safeguard our public libraries and make them stronger than ever!

Thank you, Merci Beacoup, Chi Miigwech,

Paul