



Date 7 April 2011

City Council Committee Report

To: Mayor Canfield & Members of Council

Fr: Karen Brown

Re: Provincial Operating Grants to Public Libraries

Recommendation:

Whereas the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (Federation) has submitted a funding proposal to both the Ministry of Tourism & Culture and the Ministry of Finance for public libraries; and

Whereas Ontario's public libraries need sustainable ongoing funding in order to properly plan and deliver services that support the priorities of the provincial government; and

Whereas public libraries must rely increasingly on municipal funding to support their operations resulting in significant variation in service levels across the Province; and

Whereas efforts to narrow the gap between provincial and local funding would help mitigate the effects of location as well as fulfill the mandate of the Public Libraries Act; and

Whereas the funding model proposed by the Federation uses a consistent per capita rate plus some fixed supplements for rural and northern libraries;

Now Therefore be it resolved that the City of Kenora hereby calls on the Provincial government to implement the funding model as proposed by the Federation for funding public libraries; and

That a copy of this resolution be forwarded to the Honourable Michael Chan, Minister of Tourism and Culture, the Honourable Dwight Duncan, Minister of Finance, the Honourable Rick Bartolucci, Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing, Greg Rickford, MP (Kenora), Howard Hampton, MPP (Kenora – Rainy River), Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association.

Background:

During the recent Library budget presentation, Council was made aware of a submission that had been made by the Federation of Ontario Public Libraries (Federation) to both the Ministry of Tourism & Culture and the Ministry of Finance for updating the funding for public libraries. Following the presentation, the Library submitted to the City a copy of the request from the Federation seeking support from its members for its funding proposal through lobbying senior levels of government.

It is recognized that the key lobbying efforts were centered around the Province's 2011 / 2012 budget deliberations – a document that was recently released. In discussions with Erin Roussin, CEO of the Kenora Public Library, it was felt that, while the budget has already been released, and while she understands that there has been some adjustment to library funding in the budget, it is unknown at this time if the Federation's proposal was included in the budget as submitted. It was further felt that the City's support, including a request to other municipalities for this support, would still be of benefit to the Federation's position. Erin has confirmed that this amended funding formula would be of benefit to the Kenora Public Library.

As such, it is recommended that a supporting resolution be passed, and distributed to the applicable Provincial Ministers, our local MP and MPP, as well as the Association of Municipalities of Ontario and the Northwestern Ontario Municipal Association to show the City's support on this matter.

Budget:

n/a

Communication Plan/Notice By-law Requirements:

Copies of the resolution will be distributed as outlined within the resolution.

Cc: Erin Roussin, CEO, Kenora Public Library