

Report to / Rapport au:

**Ottawa Public Library Board
Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa**

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File Number: OPLB-2021-0403

SUBJECT: 2021 Ottawa Public Library Board Work Plan

OBJET: Plan de travail 2021 du Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa

REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Ottawa Public Library Board:

- 1. Approve the 2021 Board Work Plan (Appendix 1); and,**
- 2. Receive the 2021 Corporate Work Plan (Appendix 2) for information.**

RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT

Que le Conseil d'administration de la Bibliothèque publique d'Ottawa :

- 1. Adopte le plan de travail 2021 du Conseil d'administration (Annexe 1);**
- 2. Prenne connaissance du plan de travail 2021 de la corporation pour information (Annexe 2).**

BACKGROUND

On June 11, 2019, the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Board approved the 2020-2023 Strategic Plan (OPLB-2019-0601), including the Strategic Statement, Directions, and Priorities. The Board also approved the OPL values of Community, Inclusion, Integrity, Intellectual Freedom, and Literacy. The Strategic Plan was developed after a multi-step process that involved an external consultant and an Ad hoc Committee on Governance, included an environmental scan, analysis of trends and drivers, strategic planning sessions with the Board, management, employees, and the community, culminating in the June 2019 Board report.

The Strategic Priorities provide OPL with the strategic direction to inform the development of annual work plans for both the Board and staff. As per Board Policy 001 – Roles and Responsibilities of the Board and Trustees (“Board Roles and Responsibilities Policy”), the Board’s “...attention shall primarily be on the long-term needs and goals for OPL.” Traditionally, the annual Board and Corporate Work Plans are presented to the Board for their approval in Q1; however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this report was delayed by one month.

The purpose of this report is to seek the Board’s approval of the 2021 Board Work Plan and inform the Board of the 2021 Corporate Work Plan.

DISCUSSION

The COVID-19 Pandemic

The pandemic, the provincial and municipal states of emergency, and the resulting operational impact on OPL affected the implementation of 2020 work plans significantly and will continue to affect the 2021 (and potentially 2022) work plans. The ongoing pandemic has required OPL to redesign many services and consider which services can no longer be offered at this time.

The 2021 Board Work Plan

The 2021 Board Work Plan (Document 1) includes key action items involving the Board’s stewardship, strategic direction, and active participation. The items are both legacy and future-focused activities. Activities and initiatives for 2021 align with each of the approved Priorities. Key action items were determined by considering activities

initiated in 2019 and 2020 with continued efforts in 2021, as well as new activities that will strategically advance the organization.

One example of a new activity is Item 1i, developing a service delivery framework. The current OPL service framework was approved by the Board in March 2003 (Item #8.1 Doc. #03-16). Assuming that a service framework can be expected to last for approximately a decade, this framework is now close to 10 years out of date and is no longer in common use among Library staff. During the coronavirus pandemic, as staff planned the recovery of library operations, it became clear that an updated service delivery framework was necessary. The new service delivery framework will help OPL provide more a consistent and equitable service experience and provide standards to guide decision-making. It will focus on modes of service and channels in which the Library delivers services and will align with existing and in-progress frameworks. The new framework is already in progress and staff expect to present a draft to the Board later in 2021.

Several items are “on hold” at present; in some cases, the increased operational workload during the pandemic has affected progress on these items, and in other cases there are dependencies that affect the timing of the item. Items appearing on this list require Board authority to approve, as per OPL Board Policy 002-OPLB Delegation of Authority (“the DOA”).

The 2021 Corporate Work Plan

The 2021 Corporate Work Plan (Document 2) includes key action items that are operational in nature, complementing the items on the Board Work Plan. The Corporate Work Plan recognizes that significant staff involvement will occur in implementing the aforementioned items of the Board Work Plan, as well as items that advance the organization in several key areas. Items on Corporate Work Plan fall within the CEO’s delegated authority under the DOA.

A few items of note:

- Item 1xiii, the response plan to the COVID-19 pandemic, is marked “in progress.” Although the OPL COVID-19 Recovery Plan - Update report was presented to the Board in February 2021 (OPLB-2021-0101), the pandemic is certainly still present and continues to affect Library operations. The Recovery Plan Update report presents the four strategic pillars for service planning and delivery, and

outlines staff 's plan to resume services and programs in an incremental manner, during the remainder of the "COVID Current" period (the time when OPL will be required to move efficiently between service zones as directed by provincial legislation, until such time that the COVID-19 pandemic is declared over, estimated to last for the next 12-18 months). The Ad hoc Committee for COVID recovery remains active, however, and is noted under Item 1vi on the Board Work Plan; trustees will continue to advise staff regarding recovery planning and post-pandemic planning.

- Item 1xvi, developing an inclusion and anti-racism action plan, appears on the Corporate Work Plan only. OPL is making a corporate commitment to address systemic barriers related to inclusion and anti-racism. As a predominantly white workforce, and in listening to experts in this work and colleagues at the City, staff will take a multi-pronged and multi-year approach focusing on internal and external awareness, analysis, and action. Staff are eager to engage the Board in this work and will consider how this may best take shape as the action plan develops. Also, note that although this item is entered under section 1 at present, it will be interwoven into all aspects of the Corporate Work Plan; anti-racism work must be fully integrated into public and staff services and planning at all levels, including identifying the ways in which OPL policies and practices uphold racism.

While strategic priorities exist for the term of the Board, the work plans are not exhaustive listings of the activities to be undertaken by the Board and staff. Work plans are focused on the key action items for 2021, given the time, scope, and effort required for some of the files. Approval of the work plan herein does not preclude the addition of items that may arise during the year for which the Board directs staff to complete, or other work carried out during the normal course of operations.

CONSULTATION

Several sources informed the planning discussions for the 2021 Board Work Plan. The Ottawa Public Library Senior Management Team developed the annual Corporate Work Plan with input from management and other staff. Board Trustees were engaged in the strategic planning process in 2019; as mentioned above, the majority of workplan items relate directly to the OPL Board Strategic Plan for 2020 – 2023.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Funding for all activities within this report are covered by the approved 2020 OPL Capital and Operating budgets.

ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS

There are no technology implications associated with this report

BOARD PRIORITIES

If approved, this report confirms the Ottawa Public Library Board's 2020 Work Plan.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Document 1 2021 Board Work Plan

Document 2 2021 Corporate Work Plan

DISPOSITION

If approved, staff will facilitate the completion of the Board Work Plan items and complete the Corporate Work Plan items.