

**Report to / Rapport au:**

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

**November 30, 2021 / 30 novembre 2021**

**Submitted by / Soumis par:**

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**File Number: OPLB-2021-1105A**

**SUBJECT: 2022 Board Continuing Education Plan and Conference Attendance**

**OBJET: Plan de formation du Conseil d'administration de 2022 et participation aux conférence**

#### **REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS**

**That the Ottawa Public Library Board:**

- 1. Approve the 2022 Board Continuing Education Plan (Document 1); and,**
- 2. Approve the attendance of Trustees for the 2022 Conferences as proposed.**

#### **RECOMMANDATIONS DU RAPPORT**

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

- 1. Approuve le plan de formation continue de 2022 (Document 1);**
- 2. Approuve la participation des administrateurs et administratrices pour les conférences de 2022, tel que proposé**

## **BACKGROUND**

In accordance with the Ottawa Public Library (OPL) Board Policy 003-OPLB Trustee Orientation and Continuing Education, trustees are encouraged during their term to attend relevant conferences, seminars, and workshops, as well as participate in provincial and national associations. Trustees are also encouraged to participate in several internal educational opportunities to learn more about the Library's programs and services (including Board educationals, generally presented during Board meetings, and field opportunities at OPL locations). Staff develop an annual Continuing Education Plan ("the Plan") for trustees, which highlights available continuing education opportunities for the upcoming year.

Continuing education for trustees is guided by the principles of fairness (for example, each trustee should have the opportunity to attend a minimum of one library conference during their four-year term) and fiscal responsibility (the Library budget). A trustee who takes an active role in a conference or workshop (e.g. the Board's representative on an external body, or participating as presenter or panelist) will be given priority.

Conference or workshop attendance or participation, and the associated expenses, are subject to Board pre-approval, in keeping with two OPL Board policies: 002-OPLB Delegation of Authority ("the DOA") and 007-OPLB Trustee Expense Reimbursement, as well as the City of Ottawa Travel Guidelines.

Trustees attending a conference of a duration longer than 24 hours are required to provide a written report. The report will be submitted to the Board within two (2) Board meetings immediately following the conference. For conferences of less than 24 hours, trustees are required to provide a verbal report at the meeting immediately following the conference.

The purpose of this report is to recommend that the Board approve the attached Plan (Document 1), and further approve the attendance of Trustees for 2022 conferences as proposed. Once more, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has reinforced the notion that learning comes in a variety of modes, including online and in person, as well as a variety of formats, including lectures, meetings, and field opportunities. The recommended Plan aligns with existing OPL policies, including the Trustee Orientation and Continuing Education Policy, and provides flexibility, acknowledging that opportunities may change and evolve as the pandemic situation continues.

## **DISCUSSION**

Each year, staff compile information regarding development opportunities for trustees. The 2022 plan includes three components: Board educationals, webinars and seminars, and meetings and conferences, as in previous years. Given the continuing COVID-19 pandemic, many opportunities continue to be virtual, and some opportunities may be subject to change during the year. At the time of the writing of this report, the government of Canada no longer advises against non-essential travel<sup>1</sup>. Therefore, staff are recommending that some trustees attend events in-person. Any trustee attending a conference out of country will be required to comply with any and all regulations from the government of Canada, regarding travel. Staff will work closely with trustees should any travel recommendations or procedures change between the time of this report, and the event scheduled in 2022.

### **Board Educationals**

During 2021, staff provided virtual educationals at Board meetings about Collection News (April), Accessibility Services (May), and Service OPL (June). Educationals regarding the Creating Leadership program, Inclusion Services, and Planning, proposed in the OPL Board - Continuing Education Plan 2021, were not conducted due to the operational changes and requirements.

Staff recommend the following topics for 2022 educationals: Community Development, Digital Content Advocacy, Development Charges, and Copyright.

### **Field Opportunities**

The following virtual field opportunities were completed in 2021:

- Staff invited all trustees to attend the virtual re-opening ceremony for the newly-renovated Rosemount branch (June)
- Taking a virtual tour/video of Beaverbrook branch (July)
- A video on community development work was provided virtually via email (November)
- An in-person tour of Content Services (December)

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.ctvnews.ca/health/coronavirus/canada-no-longer-advising-against-non-essential-travel-first-time-since-march-2020-1.5633691>

Two field opportunities initially planned for 2021 were not conducted due to operational changes and requirements: “Homebound Services”, as well as “Behind the scenes of a virtual program”.

A list of suggested field opportunities for 2022 can be found in Document 1.

### **Webinars and Seminars**

Staff continue to recommend virtual webinar participation at this time. Should any in-person seminars become available in 2022, in-person attendance may be considered, as long as participation is permitted as per provincial and municipal legislation.

2022 marks the final year of this term of the Board, a time when trustees approve frameworks and policies for the next term of the Board, as well as receive their legacy report. As a result, this Plan includes webinars related to governance, specifically the “Governance Hub” suite of online learning offered by the Ontario Library Service (OLS). As well, OLS Leadership by Design on LearnHQ (an extensive online learning resource developed for public library board members) contains a free series of learning modules mapped to each year of the four-year public library board cycle. Staff recommend OLA’s Module 5: Developing a Board Legacy and Succession Plan.

The Plan also includes webinars hosted by the Education Institute (EI), a professional development and continuing education program for the library community developed by the Partnership of Provincial and Territorial Library Associations of Canada, and webinars hosted by the Urban Libraries Congress (ULC).

Links to the suggested online resources can be found in Document 1.

### **Meetings and Conferences**

While some conferences are being planned wholly-virtually, others are being planned for in-person attendance. As well, some groups are forecasting hybrid in-person and virtual events.

Staff recommended trustee participation in five conferences for 2022 (in-person and/or virtual): the Ontario Library Association (OLA) Super Conference, the Public Library Association (PLA) conference, the International Federation of Library Associations

(IFLA) Conference, the Canadian Federation of Library Associations (CFLA) conference, and Urban Library Council (ULC) Forums. Details at this time are as follows; please see Document 1 for more information:

- OLA Super Conference: February 1 - 5 (virtual);
  - Estimated costs for 1 trustee: \$200
- PLA Conference: March 23-25 (in-person in Portland, Oregon & virtual);
  - Estimated costs for 1 trustee: \$4,300.
- IFLA Conference: July 24-28 (in-person in Dublin, Ireland);
  - Estimated costs for 1 trustee: \$6,200.
- CFLA Conference: Date TBD (in-person in Montreal, Quebec);
  - Estimated costs for 1 trustee: \$1,000.
- ULC Forums: dates and locations TBD;
  - Estimated costs for 1 trustee: \$4,300.

Staff note that the Urban Libraries Council has not set locations or dates for their events yet. As such, when information becomes available, staff will keep interested trustees informed, to determine attendance. Note that all budget figures are estimated in Canadian dollars.

A call for expressions of interest regarding these conferences was circulated to trustees in November. Please see Document 1 for the detailed listing of recommended conferences for 2022. Conferences or meetings announced after this report has been approved will be considered by staff and trustees on a first-come, first-serve basis, respecting the principles of fairness and fiscal responsibility.

Taking into consideration these principles, as well as trustee requests, staff recommend:

- OLA Super Conference (virtually) - 1 trustee: Vice Chair Fisher
- PLA conference (in-person) - 1 trustee: Trustee Begg
- IFLA Conference (in-person) - 1 trustee: Chair Luloff
- CFLA conference (in-person) - 1 trustee: Trustee Brown
- ULC Forums – 1 trustee: TBD when more information is available

## **CONSULTATION**

As part of the consultation process, trustees were provided with details of the conferences (as available) and encouraged to express interest.

## **ACCESSIBILITY IMPACTS**

There are no accessibility impacts associated with this report.

## **BOARD PRIORITIES**

The report aligns with OPL's value of Literacy, by cultivating the joys of learning and discovering. It also aligns with OPL Board policy 003: Trustee Orientation and Continuing Education, as well as 002-OPLB Delegation of Authority ("the DOA") and 007-OPLB Trustee Expense Reimbursement.

## **BUSINESS ANALYSIS IMPLICATIONS**

There are no business analysis considerations associated with this report.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The 2022 Draft Budget includes \$38,000 for costs associated with Board initiatives. Of this total, the budget has allocated \$10,000 for trustee attendance at conferences. The estimated costs per conference are noted above and come to a total of \$16,000 for 2022. As such, we will reallocate \$6,000 from the budget line for "professional services" and move it to the line for conference attendance. The "professional services" budget for 2022 is set at \$19,000. This re-allocation reduces the "professional services" budget to \$13,000 but will not impact operations or other strategic projects. 2022 is the last year of this term of board, and as such, there will be less need for professional services. Moreover, this budget line is often underspent, and we believe that \$13,000 is sufficient to cover any costs the board will need.

Should the COVID-19 pandemic change and result in a change to the government of Canada's travel recommendations, and/or should trustees not be able to attend in-person conferences outside of the country as planned in this report, any unspent funds will flow through the operating budget as per normal practice, can be allocated to additional training opportunities, and will contribute to any surplus, or offset any year-end deficit, as applicable.

## **LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications associated with this report.

## **RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no risk management implications associated with this report.

## **TECHNOLOGY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no technology implications associated with this report.

## **SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION**

Document 1 – OPL Board 2022 Continuing Education Plan

## **DISPOSITION**

Pending Board approval, staff will coordinate registration fees. Travel arrangements, flights, and accommodations for 2022 travel will be coordinated for in-person conferences. Participating trustees will submit reports as per Board policy. Reports will summarize key highlights and provide other relevant facts aimed at supporting information-sharing and Board development.

Staff shall communicate opportunities for professional development activities, such as webinars and seminars.