



Peterborough Public Library

To: Library Board of Trustees
From: Jennifer Jones, Library CEO
Meeting Date: November 10, 2020
Subject: Report PPL20-022
Library CEO Report November 2020

Purpose

A report to inform the Library Board of Trustees on general matters concerning Library operations and services.

Recommendation

That the Library Board approves the recommendation as outlined in Report PPL20-022 dated November 10, 2020, of the Library CEO as follows:

That the report to inform the Library Board on general matters concerning Library operations and service be received for information.

Budget and Financial Implications

There are no budget or financial implications resulting from the approval of the recommendation of this report.

Background

Public Computers

The project to upgrade the computers to a Windows based system continues to present a few challenges, but we are hopeful to have it resolved soon. It was necessary to order new thin client hardware for the workstations which has not yet arrived at the time of

writing this report. The parts remain on backorder and staff have been following- up weekly to check for updates.

Printing services are available with staff assistance for members of the public.

Grant Application

The Adult Programming and Outreach Librarian has submitted applications for two separate grants – one provincial and one federal. Both grants were supported by our partnership with Age Friendly Peterborough (AFP) and have a focus on supporting senior engagement through technology instruction.

Arabic Collection

In 2016, as a response to the arrival of several Syrian refugee families, we established a small collection of fiction titles in Arabic as well as dual-language Arabic/English learning materials for the refugees and their sponsors. The fiction element of the collection was not well used, and in general there has been a steady decline in the use of this collection. It has also proven very difficult to find appropriate new material to refresh/update it. After much consideration, it was determined that the best approach was for us to retain the Arabic/English learning materials and offer the fiction collection as a donation to the New Canadians Centre, who have accepted our donation offer.

Visiting Library Services

The service was reinstated mid-September. Prior to their first delivery, staff met with each volunteer to review health and safety measures and to show them the new process for picking up and returning library materials. The service is currently running one delivery per month to interested residents of private and retirement homes. When the pandemic restrictions are eased, we will be in a better position to increase our volunteers, and then increase deliveries/add more patrons to the service.

Building Diverse Collections

Our Collection Development Librarian has started taking a three-day online course entitled “Building Diverse Collections”. The course is taught by a combination of people of diverse backgrounds working in the library and publishing industry.

Generally speaking, library staff who make collection purchasing decisions do their best to acquire a wide range of materials on a range of diverse subjects created by diverse voices. A library can say that it has “many” diverse materials but typically they haven’t taken any quantitative measures to determine how diverse their collection really is.

One of the outcomes of this course will be an implementation of an audit of the library’s collections to determine the percentages of various categories of diversity. These diversity categories have yet to be determined but may include LGBTQ+, visible

minorities, individuals with disabilities, etc. Once percentages have been identified, target goals will be set for future collection development of these categories. This audit will involve a range of library staff and will take place in late 2020 or early 2021 (dependent on staff schedules and work plans).

Staff Training

All staff attended group training – offered in three sessions to ensure social distancing and safety measures - at the end of October entitled “Enhancing a Sensitive and Respectful Workplace”. These sessions covered the rights and responsibilities of employees and employers in the workplace concerning issues such as bullying and harassment with respect to the updated Occupation Health and Safety Legislation.

Marketing and Communication

Instagram engagement has increased notably as a result of direct messages from people who are loving our Craft-Along and Grab and Go Craft programs.

Twitter, on the other hand, has seen a decrease in engagement. Due to the pandemic many of our services are temporarily not available making our Tweets very program heavy, which is not what our followers on Twitter want as content.

Programming

The Fall programming session started at the end of September with both Pride Week and Culture Days and will run until early December. The Programming Team have been incredibly adaptive and have turned up their creativity to bring a great set of new programs for this session.

For October:

Total participants in Adult synchronous online events: 53

Total registrants for Adult make & take programs: 15 (with 18 on waiting list!)

Total Views of Adult Online videos (Librarians Live at Lunch): 124

Our first Teen Reviewers meeting saw 10 very excited participants ready to go!

The cookbook club have been cooking up delicious treats and sharing their experiences with the group. Staff aren't quite sure yet if it's a good thing or a bad thing that they can't be in the same physical space to taste each other's successful concoctions.

Children's programming

Read Aloud Chapter Book Club: We had 17 register for our first time offering this new program. Registered patrons are sent weekly emails with a video of our staff member reading two chapters from “Key Hunters: The Mysterious Moonstone”, by Eric Luper. The video includes shots of the reader as well as shots of the actual pages in the book

so kids can see the pictures and read along. The intention was that registrants could “listen” or “read along” each week by opening their emails and playing the video at a time that was most convenient for them.

Testimonial: “Hi! I was behind with the video book club, but I watched all three videos and I really like them! I have 2 chapters left the first Percy Jackson book that I am reading so I am going to try to finish it today. I can't wait for your next video!”

Grab & Go Crafts: Every Saturday morning, we offer 50 packaged craft kits that patrons can pick up on a first come first serve basis. These have mostly all been collected on Saturdays, but we sometimes have a handful left on Tuesday morning.

Golden Leaf Contest: Nine leaves have been found so far and prizes have been excitedly claimed. This contest runs until December 1, 2020.

Story Time @ Home: The registration is ongoing for this program and has been steadily increasing! Patrons can subscribe on our website or event calendar at any time to receive our weekly “story time @ home” emails. These emails include a 10–15 minute video of staff performing a story time with songs, rhymes, a book, glove and felt stories. These emails also include the lyrics to some of the rhymes and links to other books on the theme, a craft activity, colouring sheets, and information about other library services or events.

Testimonials: “We are watching your library story time videos each week” (mother with two young daughters). A grandmother told us she has been sending our story time emails to her daughter and grandchild and that “they love the songs and rhymes.”

Plans for winter programming have begun, and the team is exploring the possibility of more outreach ideas, particularly for those experiencing social isolation.

One of our plans is to offer a “Holiday Tales” outreach program in partnership with Lansdowne Place Mall. This is similar to the Storefront Stories program offered in August 2020 where pages from a story will be displayed along a designated trail in the mall, and readers will follow the trail to read the story.

General Service

We are in the process of turning SMS notifications back on. Patrons will soon be able to elect to receive notifications from the library via phone, email or text message.

Overall, staff are feeling more comfortable and are finding a new rhythm to offering services to library patrons in a pandemic. The practice of cleaning between patrons, asking people to step back to ensure social distancing, and going over our quarantine procedure with patrons is becoming more routine and feeling much less awkward.

Everyone – both staff and patrons – have been incredibly understanding and patient as we all work through these strange times.

Voluntary Contact Tracing was also introduced at the library mid-October. Staff are rotating through a new “Greeter” position at the front entrance of the library to:

- Welcome patrons as they enter
- Count patrons entering and exiting the library (to ensure the facility capacity limit of 50 is maintained)
- Ask patrons if they are willing to share their library card number/name & contact info for contact tracing
- Track this information, as well as time of entry in a spreadsheet
- Ensure that all patrons entering the library are wearing a mask, unless they have a medical or religious exemption

At this time, it is not mandatory for patrons to provide us their information for contract tracing. If anyone does not wish to participate, they are welcome to enter the library without doing so.

There are some staffing and scheduling challenges that have presented themselves with this new Greeter task that are being analyzed and evaluated to see how we might adapt things to accommodate it.

The library is seeing the affects of the current reality in facility and physical item usage. There has been a noticeable, though understandable drop overall.

	October 2020	October 2019
Physical Item Checkouts and renewals	25,803	38,159
New memberships	196	283
Footfall count	10,803	24,985

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