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Library Board Report

To: Newmarket Public Library Board
From: Todd Kyle, C.E.O.
Date: June 19, 2019
RE: **Interlibrary loan service update**

Background:

As reported at the April 17, 2019 meeting, the Province of Ontario has cut the annual grant to Southern Ontario Library Service (SOLS) roughly in half. SOLS is relied on by the Library for many services, including consortial purchasing (e.g. Overdrive e-books), training, consultation, and governance advice. One of the most important services SOLS provides is inter-library loan (ILL). ILL is facilitated by a shared online database that allows staff and patrons to place requests that are then routed to the nearest holding library. Books are then delivered through a network of courier vans. For deliveries in remote areas, or for books coming from outside Ontario, shipment is made via Canada Post, who offer a steeply discounted Library Book Rate, using an online shipping label tool operated by the library community. (The Library Book Rate is paid for only once, by the loaning library, and includes return shipping).

Immediately following the budget announcement, SOLS announced that they were suspending the ILL service and permanently cancelling the delivery service. As of June 1, the interlibrary loan database has been restored, but without the courier service. Instead, libraries will need to use Canada Post for deliveries. SOLS has made further cuts to their budget, freeing up \$340,000 for reimbursement of libraries' shipping costs. This amount will be divided up by shipping volume among all participating libraries one per year starting in January 2020.

For Newmarket Public Library, reinstating the service comes with a number of pressures beyond the upfront cost and uncertain rate of reimbursement. These include the staff time to weigh and label each book, apply postage (a standard postage meter is unusable), and deliver it to a mailbox (we have made inquiries with Canada Post about possible pick-up). This is in addition to possible packaging costs—Canada Post will likely not accept the reusable cloth bags that the SOLS courier used.

At this point, most libraries, like NPL, are planning to reinstate the service, but will have to consider some measures to restrict lending in order to contain the costs. For example, the SOLS

database allows libraries to create restrictions such as the type of material (such as not lending DVDs, which can also be damaged in the mail). In addition, libraries may consider placing restrictions on the requests their own patrons place, such as by requiring staff authorization of all patron-placed requests. At this point NPL has taken no definitive measures. Instead, we will monitor the volume in both directions as well as how many libraries continue to participate, and determine what measures might be necessary. In addition, we will gather information in order to determine any needed increase to our shipping budget line over and above the eventual reimbursement, and report that back to the Board.

Conclusion:

The following motion is recommended:

THAT the Library Board receive the report on Interlibrary Loan Service Update.