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Library Board Report

To: Newmarket Public Library Board
From: Todd Kyle, C.E.O.
Date: December 18, 2019
RE: **Books for Babies program**

Background:

The Library's Strategic Projects Officer has instituted a number of collaborative programs with the medical librarian at Southlake Regional Health Centre, including a deposit of Library popular reading material at the hospital's Stronach Regional Cancer Centre patient library. Together with the Library's Head of Children's Services, he has also begun a project called *Books For Babies: Where It All Begins*.

Starting in 2020, the public libraries of Newmarket, Aurora and East Gwillimbury will purchase multiple copies of a chosen Canadian infant-appropriate board book, with an eye to representing diversity, and distribute these free of charge to parents enrolled in Southlake's prenatal parenting classes. The books will include information brochures from each of the libraries to encourage parents to visit with their newborn in order to encourage early literacy.

At this point, the plan does not include distributing the books to all babies born at the hospital, although the brochures will be given to them. This is due to the expense of distributing books to the estimated 2600 babies born annually, as compared to the estimated 600 couples enrolled in the parenting classes. At the same time, the Library will purchase smaller numbers of the books in order to distribute them to participants in its own programs such as Babytime and Parent-Child Mother Goose.

The cost of the books is estimated to be up to \$3000 annually, accounting for Newmarket's share of the parenting class distribution as well as the Library's own giveaway. In order to pay for this, in accordance with the Fundraising Policy, this project has been designated as a beneficiary of the Library's fundraising efforts. The website, as well as the Canada Helps account, have been updated to indicate that funds raised are to be used for "special guest events like authors and performers, technology such as robotics and 3D printing, and a book giveaway for newborn babies." Funds raised are added to the Fundraising Reserve, whose 2018

year-end balance was \$13,250. In addition to funds raised online, the Southlake Cinemania program's net proceeds contribute roughly \$2000-\$3000 annually, and unsolicited in-person donations that are not needed to balance the budget are also added to the Reserve at year-end. Given that Reserve funds are typically spent on smaller ad hoc programs (for example, it will pay for a guest speaker for a Black History Month program), and that typically the funds do not need to be transferred out of the Reserve due to budget surpluses, it is projected that *Books For Babies* can be easily sustained and even grown in the future.

Conclusion:

The following motion is recommended:

THAT the Library Board receive the report on the Books For Babies program.