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Library Board Report

To: Newmarket Public Library Board

From: Todd Kyle, C.E.O.

Date: December 18, 2019

RE: **Further responses regarding deputation of October 16, 2019**

Background:

After library user Kayla Scott presented a deputation at the October 16, 2019 Board meeting, requesting the Board take action on community inclusion with reference to gender identity and gender expression, a report recommending actions in response was prepared. When this report was presented at the November 20, 2019 Board meeting, Ms. Scott presented a series of written comments in response. The Board then asked the C.E.O. to respond to these comments at the December 18, 2019 meeting.

There is a need to ensure that staff are better prepared to serve a diverse community in an inclusive manner. To that end, as authorized by the Board, and consistent with the York Region Inclusion Charter as a policy statement, the C.E.O. has begun looking at options for appropriate staff training, in cooperation with other libraries in the region as well as with the Town of Newmarket. It is anticipated that this training can be implemented as soon as winter 2020.

Further, as authorized by the Board, the C.E.O. will work with the Diversity and Inclusion Working Group on commencing a review of Town of Newmarket policies with a diversity lens to ensure that policies are consistent with the goal of inclusion. A parallel process will take place to ensure library policies are consistent with those of the Town.

In addition, the Board has added the matter of diverse representation on the Board to its action list regarding future recruitment as well as strategic planning. Ms. Scott has also suggested the creation of an ad-hoc “community representative committee” but it is recommended that this not be instituted for a number of reasons. First, the Board does not have any other advisory committees of this type. Second, convening committees requires a significant investment of staff resources, and the Board has typically limited itself only to those instances where an advisory committee is legally required. Third, there is an existing Diversity and Inclusion Working Group of staff at the Town and Library that will provide assistance as these issues move

forward. Finally, the Board's planned actions are sufficient to respond to the concerns raised, and Ms. Scott is to be thanked for bringing her concerns forward.

Lastly, as suggested by Ms. Scott, the Board has authorized staff to cease collecting gender identity for statistical purposes, effective immediately. A bulk change on existing user records to remove previously collected gender information has also been carried out, and the existing print form will be changed accordingly. However, there is an online form (rarely used) where the gender question cannot be removed by the Library; instead, it has been noted as "optional" (it includes an "n/a" choice) and the Library has submitted a request for it to be removable in future software releases.

Conclusion:

The following motions are recommended:

THAT the Library Board receive the report on Further Responses Regarding Deputation of October 16, 2019;

AND THAT this item be placed on the Action List and the C.E.O. instructed to report back to the Board when and if Board input and review are needed.