

## **Recognizing Former Chief Librarians and City Librarians**

<b>Date:</b>	November 24, 2009
<b>To:</b>	Naming Committee
<b>From:</b>	City Librarian

### **SUMMARY**

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At the May 19, 2009 meeting of the Naming Committee of the Toronto Public Library Board, a *report was requested on the processes for recognizing former chief librarians from Toronto and predecessor systems*. This report recommends guidelines for the recognition of chief librarians and city librarians.

The tradition of effective board governance and oversight partnered with innovative leadership from chief librarians have contributed to Toronto Public Library's reputation as an essential, valued and well-managed community resource.

In recognition of the role of chief librarians in the leadership of the library, this report recommends:

- recognition of all former chief librarians of the seven pre-amalgamation Toronto public library systems;
- guidelines for the recognition of former Toronto Public Library City Librarians.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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**The City Librarian recommends that the Naming Committee recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:**

1. approves the installation of a permanent plaque displaying the names of all pre-amalgamation chief librarians of the former library systems, their terms of office and system affiliations, at the Toronto Reference Library; and
2. approves the installation of a plaque to recognize former City Librarians as they leave Toronto Public Library, and an official photograph and summary achievements to be placed in the archives.

## **Implementation Points**

- The plaque honouring all former chief librarians of predecessor library systems and the plaque for City Librarians with the first City Librarian, Josephine Bryant's name, would be introduced at a modest ceremony in 2010.

## **FINANCIAL IMPACT**

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It is anticipated that the large format plaque for all the former chief librarians of the pre-amalgamation systems and the plaque to recognize City Librarians post amalgamation will have a cost which will not exceed \$2,500 and will be accommodated in the 2010 Operating Budget.

The Director, Finance and Treasurer has reviewed this financial impact statement and is in agreement with it.

## **DECISION HISTORY**

There were a variety of practices for recognizing chief librarians in the former systems, including the naming of branches and rooms and displaying commemorative plaques. There are three branches, Evelyn Gregory, named in 1968; George H. Locke, named in 1945; and Sanderson named in 1967, after former chief librarians. Former staff also have branches named after them. Maria A. Shchuka branch, was named in 1997 and Lillian H. Smith branch named in 1995. A number of rooms, collections and programs are also named after staff. This recognition was frequently associated with fundraising initiatives or the establishment of trusts in the name of the person recognized. Other naming of buildings has been associated with Board members or prominent politicians and citizens.

Policies for the former Toronto libraries were searched for details regarding recognition of chief librarians and staff when individuals left their positions. Policy statements for staff recognition and retirement existed for Etobicoke, East York, Scarborough, and the former Toronto public libraries. Practices included a letter or individual gift of a plaque from the board chair, an invitation to the board's annual staff reception, and a gift, usually a book, with suggested price ranges based on years of service.

## **Practices in Canadian Libraries**

There are a variety of practices to honour chief executive officers, including displays of photographs and plaques and branches and rooms named in recognition of public service. An informal survey of chief executive officers in Ontario about current practices found that the most common recognition is a media release when the chief librarian leaves or retires from their position. Typically, this includes an acknowledgement of his or her contributions to library service. This is either combined with or separate from the media release that announces the new CEO. The chief librarian's retirement is documented in the board minutes, noting years of service and accomplishments. Usually a social gathering, such as a dinner or an open house, also takes place. Calgary and Ottawa public libraries also have portraits of former chief librarians on display in the administrative areas.

The Internet was searched for examples of how university librarians were recognized when they retire. Again, in most cases, a media release documented the retirement and the accomplishments of the chief librarian. A gift or plaque was presented as part of a reception or dinner. Occasionally, university libraries announced the establishment of a bursary in the chief librarian's name.

### **City Boards and Institutions**

City of Toronto boards and institutions were consulted to discover current practices for recognizing the chief executive officer when he or she leaves the position.

The Toronto Catholic District School Board displays an official photograph of the board chair and the Director of Education, placed in two separate meeting rooms in the administrative area: one for board chairs and the other for Directors of Education. Retiring directors receive recognition at his or her last board meeting, along with a certificate of appreciation. A retirement function, if the person wishes, is organized where ticket sales cover the cost of the meal and a retirement gift. On the final day, an open house is held for staff to drop by and offer best wishes to the retiring director.

At the Royal Ontario Museum, a commemorative board in the public area displays the names of the directors/CEOs and their term dates engraved on brass plates. The library maintains an archival file that includes achievements and biographical information for each director/CEO. Photographs of the board chairs are displayed in the boardroom.

At the Toronto Zoo, a CEO left recently. An event was held for the staff at the zoo, which included presentations and gifts. Dinner at the Royal York Hotel attracted 90 people at \$150 a ticket. A fund for Arts and Culture was set up at the zoo in the CEO's name. As part of the dinner invitation, guests were asked to consider making a donation to the fund.

Outside the board room, photographs of the current board chair and the CEO are displayed with plaques containing each person's name and position. A photo of the CEO is taken for the annual report, which is also used for the official portrait and kept on file.

Toronto Police Services displays portraits of the Chiefs of Police, starting with amalgamation in 1957. These line the hall of the executive wing of headquarters. A large framed display of the names of the Chiefs since 1800 in cursive script is located in the Grenville lobby of police headquarters.

Over time, recognition of staff generally has become more modest.

### **COMMENTS**

The introduction of a standardized approach for recognition of former City Librarians at Toronto Public Library is recommended. Standardized recognition of the City Librarian would not preclude other recognition as outlined in the Naming Policy. The Library Board

approved a Naming Policy in 2006 and there have been requests for recognition of former chief librarians under the terms of the policy. Recently a request to recognize Peter J. Bassnett resulted in the naming of a meeting room at Goldhawk Park branch in association with a fundraising initiative to support staff in furthering their library education.

This report proposes recognition of all chief librarians of former systems and of the amalgamated Toronto Public Library. There were differing practices in place for honouring chief librarians at the local level. Currently, there is no centralized recognition for the all the chief librarians from the seven former library systems. A lasting public display in the form of a plaque is recommended to honour pre-amalgamation chief librarians. The plaque, located at the Toronto Reference Library, validates the significant role leaders have played in public libraries in Toronto, beginning in 1884.

The first City Librarian for the amalgamated Toronto Public Library has retired. This is an opportune time to establish a practice for honouring former City Librarians. At the time the City Librarian leaves, it is recommended that there be a media release summarizing their achievements. In addition, a permanent plaque with the former City Librarian's name and term of office is proposed for display in the Toronto Reference Library boardroom. The names of subsequent City Librarians will be added over time to this permanent plaque. An official photograph, biography and a brief summary of achievements will be placed in the library's archives as a permanent record of his or her legacy of leadership.

## **CONTACT**

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## **SIGNATURE**

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