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To: Toronto Public Library Board – June 14, 2004
From: City Librarian
Subject: **Budget Advocacy 2004**

Purpose:

To inform the Toronto Public Library Board about results from the 2004 budget advocacy efforts. To use the 2004 model as a starting point for 2005 budget outreach planning.

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

Not applicable.

Funding in the amount of \$5,000 - \$10,000 for 2005 advocacy training will be incorporated into the 2005 training budget.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board receive the *Budget Advocacy 2004* report for information.

Background:

At its January 19, 2004 meeting, the Toronto Public Library Board directed staff to:

- (1) prepare a list of individuals or groups, both internal and external to the Library, that may have an interest in Library services and the Library budget;
- (2) develop methods to communicate with these interested individuals and groups as the Library progresses through the 2004 budget process; and
- (3) develop easy to understand materials to support advocacy efforts undertaken by community supporters, encourage deputations and mobilize support for the Library's budget.

Comments:

The Library completed an advocacy program in April that resulted in 244 web responses. Eighty-seven percent of responses were highly positive. A secondary goal of getting members of

the public engaged on a longer-term basis were met with 80 respondents (33 percent) agreeing to receive further information about the Library, the Foundation or both. Subsequent advocacy campaigns will include MFIPPA-required language in the initial materials.

The number of respondents doubled the week that an article outlining the Library's budget issues appeared in the *Toronto Star*. It remained high for the next two weeks, while staff made collateral material available. Numbers dropped off dramatically once the press reported that the "...budget problems are over".

In terms of demographics, only 19 percent of respondents listed their addresses; an insufficient percent from which to determine any patterns.

It is interesting to note that once the advocacy campaign was underway many of the Strategic Plan comments also mentioned the budget issues.

Staff Training Options

To be effective, an advocacy campaign must involve staff at all levels of the organization. On or off the job, staff have countless opportunities to build public understanding and advocate support. To harness these resources we will develop an information and training module for staff training.

Conclusion:

The Library will expand on its civic engagement efforts, as part of the 2005 budget preparation exercise. In addition to using existing channels for information-sharing, the Library will develop key messages, create an updated database of advocates, and expand outreach to stakeholder groups.

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List of Attachments:

Not applicable.