



**Toronto Public Library
Workers Union**

Local 4948

Affiliated with
CUPE and the
Toronto & York Region
Labour Council

Maureen O'Reilly
President

Brendan Haley
Vice-President

Viveca Gretton
Recording Secretary

Carmela DeGiorgio
Secretary-Treasurer

Brian Raymer
Toronto Reference Library

Joanna Cristini
North York Central Library

Nahid Rahnvard
North Region

Karen Smith
South Region

Samee-Lee Grossman
East Region

Mary Bissell
West Region

James Johnson
Facilities

Steven Burdick
Support Services

20 Eglinton Avenue West
Suite 1109, Box 2053
Toronto, ON M4R 1K8
Telephone: (416) 440-7981
FAX: (416) 440-7984
Email: info@local4948.org

www.local4948.org



December 4, 2014

Via facsimile and regular mail

Mike Foderick, Chair and the
Members of the Toronto Public Library Board
Toronto Public Library
789 Yonge Street
Toronto, ON M4W 2G8

Dear Members of the Toronto Public Library Board:

RE: 2015 Operating Budget

The Toronto Public Library workers would like to draw your attention to recent items in the media regarding the cuts to the security guard budget and our response to those cuts (see attached).

We would also like to draw to your attention to the 2014 report, *Is Toronto Fiscally Healthy? A Check-up on the City's Finances* by Enid Slack and Andre Cote from the Munk School of Global Affairs (see attached). The short answer to their question is yes. Furthermore recent media reports indicate that nine months into this year, the City of Toronto had a \$12.8 million budget surplus and is projecting a year-end surplus of \$98.4 million.

We respectfully ask that this Board reexamine their motion to cut the security guard budget by 40% and support the 2.6% increase as presented by the Toronto Public Library. We would also encourage you to set your sights higher and begin the reinvestment process that the Toronto Public Library and its users so deserve.

Yours Truly,

Maureen O'Reilly
President
TPLWU Local 4948

cc: Dan Keon, Director, Human Resources
TPLWU Local 4948 Executive Board
Grant Darling, CUPE National Representative

November 28, 2014 11:09 AM - Books

Library Union Strongly Challenges Toronto Library Board Chair, citing security concerns

TORONTO, Nov. 28, 2014 /CNW/ - The union that represents 2,200 librarians and other workers at the Toronto Public Library is strongly challenging the Toronto Public Library Board Chair because of his "remarkably uninformed" denial of the need for more security at library branches and his rejection of City Council's prior decision to not cut the security budget.

Michael Foderick, a former executive assistant to Councillor Cesar Palacio, who also sits on the library board, has been Chair of the city agency for just under a year. At the recent November 17 meeting of the Board, Foderick argued for a 40 per cent reduction in the security budget as part of the library funding request to the new City Council. A slim majority of the Board accepted his claim that security staff at many branches were not needed. City Council will consider the budget request early next year.

"For someone who is head of the busiest library system in North America, this Chair is remarkably uninformed of the realities of library security needs," says Maureen O'Reilly, President of the Toronto Public Library Workers' Union (TPLWU).

"Violent behaviour in the library system jumped 49 per cent from 2012 to 2013. In the last few weeks we have had a stabbing in a West end library, a bomb threat that closed a central downtown branch and a staff member assaulted at another branch. One east end district branch has filed 47 incident reports since the beginning of 2014, with more incidents than ever falling into the disturbing categories of violence, harassing behaviour threats, disruption, vandalism and trespass.

"Libraries are staffed mainly by women and many of our workers are young adults. Torontonians love their libraries and visit often. Many of those visitors are children enjoying our wide range of programmes," O'Reilly says.

"O'Reilly says she was shocked when Foderick put forth his motion at the board meeting and publicly boasted about it later in a newspaper interview.

"We need the security support to keep our libraries welcoming and open to all and the library workers need the support so that we can concentrate on what we do best, which is delivering the library service."

"Mr. Foderick seems quite proud of the \$663,000 he will save by cutting library security," O'Reilly added. "But with 19 million visits a year, those savings amount to three-and-a-half cents per visit. If ever there was a false economy, this is it."

Earlier this year, a City Council motion to ask the library board to eliminate security guards was decisively voted down, 36-6. The six votes to cut security were from Rob and Doug Ford and Councillors Mammoliti, Milczyn, Del Grande and Moser.

"Our new Mayor, Mr. Tory, campaigned on the idea of bringing the city together," says O'Reilly. "Can there be any doubt that virtually all Torontonians want our public libraries to be safe havens for children, seniors and everyone in between?"

"New appointments for the library board will take place soon and we hope Mr. Tory will appoint people who view our world-renowned library as the civic treasure it is, and will act to protect it and its millions of patrons."

SOURCE Toronto Public Library Workers Union

For further information: Maureen O'Reilly, 647-206-7457

Shortened URL <http://cnw.ca/LGVQ9>

ORGANIZATION PROFILE

Toronto Public Library Workers Union

[More on this organization](#)

Proposed budget cut for Toronto library security guards under fire by union

York Guardian

A plan to cut the budget for security guards at Toronto Public Library branches is under fire from the union representing library workers.

The \$660,000 cut, approved at the November meeting of the Toronto Public Library Board, would mean a 40 per cent reduction in security service at library branches across the city. Mike Foderick, the library board's chair, maintained that the security guards at the branches are often idle given the relatively small number of incidents.

But Maureen O'Reilly, president of the Toronto Public Library Worker's Union, said that the guards are essential for the safety of staff and the public — particularly given a rise in the number of incidents between 2012 and 2013, at a rate of 49 per cent.

"We're certainly not saying the libraries are unsafe but we have to deal with the reality of being in a large urban centre and being open to all," said O'Reilly, who said that in most instances library workers are indeed able to deal with troublesome patrons and other emergencies.

"It's a very heartfelt library tradition that we're proud of," she said. "We simply need some assistance here and there."

Foderick, however, maintains that the number of incidents don't justify the presence of guards — particularly as the security guards hired to work at library branches aren't empowered to intervene physically in a crisis.

"I think it's completely unjustifiable in every way and somewhat embarrassing," said Foderick, pointing as an example to the Centennial library branch in North York, where a security guard is on duty for 27 hours a week and in 2013 only one incident occurred.

"That's almost a full-time person sitting there with one incident for the entire year. I think it is unjustifiable to have a full-time person for a full year with nothing to do. You can be fearmongering as much as you want, but it doesn't make it a responsible decision," said Foderick.

The budget approved by the Toronto Public Library Board is still not set in stone.

Now, the proposal will go to City of Toronto finance staff, who will incorporate it into a recommended budget, which council will ultimately approve or reject in early 2015.

O'Reilly said she's hoping that by the time the new council is in place and seized of the issue, the decision will get reversed.

"The new administration will be selecting councillors to sit on the Library Board and it is our view that this current library board has been quite divisive the last four years — they're only interested in cutting the library budget," said O'Reilly.

Foderick, who is a citizen appointee to the board, said that if council were to put the \$660,000 back into the library budget he wouldn't say no. But he said he would rather spend the money elsewhere in the system than in beefed-up security.

"I would say if council wants to give us \$660,000, you would be amazed at the significant number of hours that I could open branches," he said.



A plan to cut the budget for security guards by the Toronto Public Library Board is being criticized by the union representing library workers.

November 25, 2014 Updated : November 25, 2014 | 5:00 pm

Security cuts part of broader plan for Toronto's libraries



By Angela Mullins Metro



Mike Donachie/MetroServices are growing while costs are being controlled at Toronto's libraries. This scene was captured at the branch in city hall.

Proposed security cuts are just the latest stage of an efficiency drive that's making Toronto's library system one to be envied, the man in charge has said.

But Michael Foderick, chair of the Toronto Public Library Board, said the drive hasn't involved cuts to services — it's the opposite.

The library board is cutting spending that doesn't need to happen, and they have been for years, he said. While they control the spending, he explained, the service is growing — through the likes of everything from automated self-checkouts to new branches.

Related:

- [Toronto Public Library: new fines, trouble with e-books helped complaints spike in 2012](#)
- [Toronto library board to consider creating a Toronto Music Library](#)
- [Toronto Public Library considers Netflix-style movie service](#)

Despite new services, the total increase in the public library board budget over four years has been just one per cent, which is 86 per cent below the rate of inflation, according to a staff report.

Sitting at 99 libraries, the system's 100th branch, with an expected operating budget of \$700,000, will open in Scarborough next year.

"The public is not interested, neither does the board support, the idea of cutting services," Foderick said. "Library service is sacred. It's something that people want to see improved and increased."

"The idea of cutting expenses is, on the other hand, something that the public is happy to see."

"It's the mark of a good budget."

The library budget is at the forefront of Foderick's mind right now after the board approved its 2015 submission to city hall on Nov. 17.

It asks for a two per cent funding increase, taking its total city funding to about \$170 million, but includes the latest efficiency savings identified by Foderick and fellow board members. There was controversy at the Nov. 17 meeting over a proposed 40 per cent cut in security guard services.

The cut — approved and part of the budget submission sent to city hall — was led by Foderick. It would save \$663,000, leaving a total cost for 2015 after the reduction of \$1 million.

Foderick led the charge, in part, because incident reports for some of the branches with security cover showed that those guards had little or nothing to do. For example, at Centennial Library on Finch Avenue West, there was only one recorded incident, which was not violent or disruptive.

"There still need to be security guards in places," Foderick said. "If you look at the figures, some libraries have more incidents.

"Those are the sort of places where some permanent on-site security presence is justified.

"When you go through the other branches, 68 of them don't have any on-site security and never have."

Among the other recent changes at the library is a new fine put in place for "holds" that aren't picked up. That's the system where people can ask that specific books be sent to their local branch.

About 15 per cent weren't being collected by the people who requested them, and bringing in a \$1 fine cut that statistic in half, Foderick said.

That makes the most popular books more readily available, while cutting costs for labour and reducing the need to buy more copies of the best-read books.

Foderick said he's proud of what's being achieved.

"It's being innovative," he said.

Toronto Public Library Board wants to slash security guards, save \$600K

Toronto could see cuts of 40 per cent in security guard services at city libraries.

On Monday night, the Toronto Public Library Board voted in favour of a budget that includes the service reduction.

But it's not a done deal. The budget must still be passed by city council, and library staff will still look for other savings ...

[Read the full article](http://metronews.ca/news/toronto/1215233/toronto-public-library-board-wants-to-slash-security-guards-save-600k/) (<http://metronews.ca/news/toronto/1215233/toronto-public-library-board-wants-to-slash-security-guards-save-600k/>).

Is Toronto Fiscally Healthy? A Check-up on the City's Finances

The 2014 municipal election is critical for the City of Toronto because the City faces major challenges in the years ahead – from improving transit infrastructure and enhancing the City's economic competitiveness to addressing income disparities and delivering a successful Pan Am Games. As the election campaigns heat up, the IMFG will be releasing a series of *Pre-Election Perspectives Papers* to explore some of the big issues that candidates and voters should be talking about.

[Read the full report](http://munkschool.utoronto.ca/imfg/uploads/288/1581fiscallyhealthyr5final.pdf) (<http://munkschool.utoronto.ca/imfg/uploads/288/1581fiscallyhealthyr5final.pdf>)