

To: Toronto Public Library Board – September 20, 2004

From: City Librarian

Subject: **Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy Status Report**

Purpose:

To provide an update to the Toronto Public Library Board on the implementation of the Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy as requested by the Board.

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

Revenues from auditorium, meeting room and theatre rentals was \$378,424 in 2003, up slightly from the 2002 amount of \$363,553, allowing the Library to operate closer to a cost-recovery basis.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board receive the *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy Status Report* for information.

Background:

Prior to the development of the new policy, both room rental policies and fee structures varied between the seven pre-amalgamated library systems. At its January 21, 2002 meeting the Toronto Public Library Board approved the *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy* and fee structure for implementation in 2003 (Attachment 1).

The policy established that the auditoriums, meeting rooms and theatres are made available to individuals and groups whose primary purpose was the promotion of cultural, educational and community activities. The policy also established that other community and commercial groups could rent the facilities. A new fee structure was implemented based on three main categories of bookings: non-profit bookings (with dues and/or contributions and without dues and/or contributions), no charge bookings, and commercial bookings. Frequent long-time users who had used the facilities for free in the past were given phased in rates over three years to minimize the financial impact.

The Board “request(ed) that staff report to the Board in 2004 on the impact of the policy on groups that use the Library’s facilities; and request that staff report to the Board in 2004 on the financial impact of the policy and fee structure.”

Comments:

In the fall of 2002 Library staff wrote to all groups that had rented library facilities over the previous 12 months informing them of the new policy and highlighting how the new policy would impact them specifically. Library staff briefed City Councillors' staff to make them aware of the new policy.

On April 1, 2003 the new policy and fee structure went into effect with little negative impact. Some groups chose to move to a smaller room or to book fewer hours, but most groups understood the reason for the new rates and accepted them with no complaint. Three written requests to waive fees were received.

The phase-in rate helped to lessen the financial impact of the fee increases for those groups that had, in the past, used the library space for free. Approximately 219 bookings were taken in at a phased in rate during 2003.

Comparative statistical data is provided in the following table. There has been modest growth in both the number of rentals and revenue generated. In 2003, the majority of room rentals continue to be made by non-profit organizations, with commercial users making up about 2.5 percent of overall numbers of bookings and approximately 8.5 percent of the overall revenue generated. No charge bookings include bookings by City staff and departments.

Booking Statistics

Type of User	Non-Profit	No Charge	Commercial	Total 2003	Total 2002
Number of bookings	5,293*	1,078	163	6,534	6,450 – 6,500
Percentage	81%	16.5%	2.5%	100%	100%
Funds Collected	\$346,000	\$0	\$32,000	\$378,000	\$363,600

Please Note: Statistics from 2002 are estimates (no data on the number of bookings was collected for the East, West and South regions until 2003)

* 2,329 bookings at the 10/hr rate; 2,964 bookings at the 15/hr rate

Revenue and Costs

Revenue	2003	2002
Theatres	71,205	88,508
Auditoriums/Rooms	212,980	189,974
Security/Extra Equipment	94,248	85,071
Total	378,434	363,553

Costs	2003	2002
Staff costs (including benefits)	367,443	345,376
Electrical & comm..	6,410	3,668
Total	375,856	351,046

2003 reported revenue of \$378,434, an increase of \$14,880 over 2002. This increase allows the Library to operate closer to a cost-recovery basis. It should be noted that the identified costs do not include branch staff costs or maintenance and capital facility costs.

Revenue from theatre bookings dropped slightly from 2002 to 2003, while revenue from auditorium/room bookings increased. The drop in theatre rentals is partly due to Fairview's two-week retrofit closure and the Toronto city-wide blackout.

Conclusion:

The Library successfully implemented the new, harmonized policy and fee structure. There were no disruptions in service, very few complaints or loss of groups. The Library experienced no loss of revenue and no major change in booking trends.

The next steps include improved financial reporting, a move towards a centralization of service and an expansion of the number of rooms available for renting after library open hours.

Contact:

Jane Pyper, Acting Director, Marketing and Communications; Tel: 416-395-5602;
Fax: 416-393-7083; E-mail: jpyper@tpl.toronto.on.ca
Anne Bailey, Director Branches; Tel: 416-397-5944; Fax: 416-393-7083;
E-mail: abailey@tpl.toronto.on.ca

Josephine Bryant
City Librarian

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Toronto Public Library Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy.