

Councillor Use of Library Space Policy

Date:	October 22, 2012
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to recommend the approval of the new Councillor Use of Library Space Policy and revisions to the Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy. The Councillor Use of Library Space Policy provides the parameters, fee structure and booking logistics whereby Councillors can book and use library space for constituency and community events and meetings. It is aligned with the City's Councillor Use of Civic Space Policy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. approves the Councillor Use of Library Space Policy (Attachment 1) and the revised Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy (Attachment 2); and
2. authorizes and directs appropriate Library staff to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

Implementation Points

The new policy will be implemented in January 2013. Implementation will include communicating with Councillors about the changes; developing a tracking mechanism for Councillor bookings; and developing processes for handling payment.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

This report has no financial impact.

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

DECISION HISTORY

On July 11, 2012, City Council adopted the Policy on Councillor Use of Civic Space (Attachment 3) and requested that City Agencies, including Toronto Public Library, adopt a similar policy for facilities under their control.

ISSUE BACKGROUND

Currently Councillor room bookings are addressed as part of the Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy, which was most recently revised by the Library Board in November 2011. This policy states that “Room rental fees are waived for meetings involving members of the public convened and attended by City of Toronto Councillors, excluding election meetings”. In 2011, Toronto Public Library had approximately 170 Councillor room bookings.

On occasion, Councillors have made requests to use space for purposes not identified in the current room booking policy. At its January 6, 2012 meeting, the Library Board considered a request to rent a meeting room at the Parkdale Branch for use as a constituency office. A decision was deferred “until the City Manager reports back to City Council concerning the use of constituency offices at Agencies, Boards and Commissions and former civic centres without impacting the Councillor’s office budget”. In the meantime, the Councillor was permitted to continue to rent space for constituency office use as an exception to the policy, as originally approved by the Library Board in June 2007.

COMMENTS

The new Councillor Use of Library Space Policy provides the parameters, fee structure and booking logistics whereby Councillors can book and use library space for constituency and community events and meetings. It recognizes that City Councillors need to communicate with their constituents concerning the meetings and activities of City Council and its committees, as well as the business and services of the City. It then lays out the policy, fees and booking limits and conditions of use (Attachment 1).

The biggest change for Councillors booking space at Toronto Public Library is that they will be entitled to three free room bookings per year for one-time community events and meetings. For additional meetings, they will be required to pay the regular non-profit room booking fee.

Under the new policy, it is clear that rooms may be rented for regular meetings with constituents and that fees will always be charged for this use. This resolves the question of the 2011 request to the Library Board to rent a meeting room at the Parkdale Branch for use as a constituency office. This policy also addresses the number of free bookings to which Councillors are entitled and Councillors booking meeting rooms on behalf of constituents.

A few small changes are required to the Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy (Attachment 2) as a result of the approval of the Councillor Use of Library Space Policy. The fee structure will continue to sit in this policy, with references to it in the Councillor Use of Library Space Policy.

CONTACT

Anne Bailey; Director, Branch Libraries; Tel: 416-397-5944; Fax: 416-393-7083;
Email: abailey@torontopubliclibrary.ca

SIGNATURE

Jane Pyper
City Librarian

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Councillor Use of Library Space Policy
Attachment 2: Revised Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy
Attachment 3: City of Toronto Policy on Councillor Use of City Space