

Notice of Motion

Date: May 27, 2014

To: Toronto Public Library Board

Topic: Report Request – Creation of a Toronto Public Library Ombudsman

Moved By: Michael Foderick, Chair

Seconded By: Jaye Robinson, Vice-Chair

Background:

The creation of the Toronto's Public Library's first Ombudsman would significantly improve the Library's already strong reputation for openness, accountability and transparency.

The Toronto Public Library has over 18 million visits per year and directly interfaces with the public on a scale that very few other public institutions do. Presently, when patrons feel that they have been treated unfairly by Library staff or Library policy the only recourse is to appeal to other staff. It is important that patrons have an independent third party who can review their complaint in an impartial way, both real and perceived. It is difficult and impractical for the Board to perform this role effectively or fairly given the size of the system. Through her investigations, the City of Toronto Ombudsman has also identified for other City Agencies, Boards and Commissions otherwise unknown deficiencies in management and Board policy.

Currently no Ombudsman has jurisdiction over the Toronto Public Library. The *City of Toronto Act* and Municipal Code restrict the authority of the City of Toronto Ombudsman to certain City agencies, boards, commissions and city-controlled corporations that do not include the Toronto Public Library.

Recommendations:

The Toronto Public Library Board hereby:

1. requests staff to report back as soon as possible on the feasibility of bringing the Toronto Public Library under the jurisdiction of the City of Toronto Ombudsman;
2. requests staff to report back on the feasibility of establishing a Toronto Public Library Ombudsman by Board resolution with similar powers and duties to those of the City of Toronto Ombudsman, under the authority of the *Public Libraries Act*, in the event that it is determined that the *City of Toronto Act* prohibits the jurisdiction of the City of Toronto Ombudsman from being expanded to include the Toronto Public Library; and
3. requests that any policy to establish a Toronto Public Library Ombudsman include a provision that if the *City of Toronto Act* is amended, or other provincial legislation is introduced, so that the Toronto Public Library is brought under the jurisdiction of another Ombudsman, that the need for a Toronto Public Library Ombudsman be reviewed by the Board.