

E-Book Advocacy

Date:	November 23, 2015
To:	Toronto Public Library Board
From:	City Librarian

SUMMARY

At the October 26, 2015 Toronto Public Library Board meeting, the Board received a presentation regarding Toronto Public Library's role in the Canadian Public Libraries for Fair EBook Pricing group recently formed to raise awareness of the restrictive pricing models and high e-book prices charged by the "Big Five" multinational publishers and to create a national dialogue on the issue.

The Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) is supporting these advocacy efforts and the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) will be discussing them at its March 2016 meeting.

Since the October meeting, the Library has learned that at the request of the Ottawa Public Library Board, the Ottawa City Council endorsed a motion to request the Department of Canadian Heritage and Industry Canada to investigate current e-book pricing practices of multinational publishers as part of any upcoming statutory review of the Copyright Act. A similar endorsement by Toronto City Council would be an effective government outreach step in the e-book advocacy campaign.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The City Librarian recommends that the Toronto Public Library Board:

1. seeks Toronto City Council's endorsement of a motion, requesting the Department of Canadian Heritage and Industry Canada to investigate current e-book pricing practices of multinational publishers as part of any upcoming statutory review of the Copyright Act; and
2. authorizes and directs staff to take the necessary action to give effect thereto.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact arising from the recommendation in this report.

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

COMMENTS

The Toronto Public Library has been a leader in building awareness of the restrictive pricing models and high e-book prices charged by the “Big Five” multinational publishers. In December 2013, Toronto City Council adopted the following motion moved by then Toronto Public Library Board Chair, Councillor Paul Ainslie:

City Council request the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to investigate publishers’ restrictive practices in making e-books and e-magazines available to public libraries, including the higher prices charged to public libraries.

The endorsement of a motion by Toronto City Council requesting the Department of Canadian Heritage and Industry Canada to investigate current e-book pricing practices of multinational publishers as part of any upcoming statutory review of the Copyright Act would be another effective government outreach step in the e-book advocacy campaign.

CONTACT

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SIGNATURE

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