

REPORT

Oakville Public Library Board

Meeting Date: November 21, 2024

FROM: Oakville Public Library

DATE: November 12, 2024

SUBJECT: CEO Update – November 21, 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

That CEO Update report be received for information.

KEY FACTS:

The following are key points for consideration with respect to this report:

- In November 2024, Stephen Paquette, of the Wikwemikong First Nation, was selected by local Indigenous community leaders and endorsed by the Chief of the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation, to support OPL in his capacity as a local Indigenous Knowledge Guide.
- The first full week of November is designated as Treaties Recognition Week in Ontario. During this week we take time to honour the importance of treaties, and their role in Canadian history.
- On November 12, CEO Tara Wong, delegated to the Town of Oakville Budget Committee to request an additional \$310,400 in funding for OPL's 2025 operating budget to fully fund the opening of the permanent Sixteen Mile branch.

BACKGROUND:

N/A

COMMENT/OPTIONS:

Indigenous Knowledge Guide

In November 2024, Stephen Paquette, of the Wikwemikong First Nation, was selected by local Indigenous community leaders and endorsed by the Chief of the Mississauga's of the Credit First Nation, to support OPL in his capacity as a local Indigenous Knowledge Guide.

OPL is the first public library in Halton region and the first Town of Oakville community service or facility to launch such an initiative.

The Indigenous Knowledge Guide Initiative at OPL plays a crucial role in promoting cultural understanding and strengthening community connections. The Guide will share knowledge through various programs and events, including talking circles where participants can learn about Indigenous cultures, protocols, and traditions in a collaborative, respectful, and culturally safe environment.

OPL provides the space and facilitates the operations of this initiative, while the Indigenous Knowledge Guide collaborates with OPL and consults upon programs and activations based on local Indigenous community needs.

The Guide will also:

- advise the Library Board, OPL staff and volunteers on ways to incorporate Indigenous cultural perspectives in the library;
- lead Indigenous teachings and ceremonies at select OPL programs and events;
- offer one-on-one meetings for community members; and
- provide mentorship to Indigenous youth and vulnerable individuals seeking leadership skill development.

Treaties Recognition Week, Nov 3-9

The first full week of November is designated as Treaties Recognition Week in Ontario. During this week OPL takes time to honour the importance of treaties, and their role in Canadian history.

This annual commemoration was launched in response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action. It aims to honour the importance of treaties and helps students and residents of Ontario learn more about treaty rights and relationships. It represents one of many steps on Ontario's journey of healing and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples.

At OPL:

- Hosted Moccasin Identifier Project programs
- Shared online resources for further learning
- Shared staff-curated reading lists

Information shared through OPL's website, social channels, the eNewsletter, and in-branch with displays and digital signage.

Budget Committee Delegation

At the September board meeting, the board passed the following motion: That the Board recommend Council provides an additional \$310,400 to the 2025 Operating Budget to fully fund the operating costs at the new Sixteen Mile branch.

On November 12, CEO Tara Wong, delegated to the Town of Oakville Budget Committee to address the funding gap for Sixteen Mile branch and bring the OPL boards request to Council.

Mayor Burton will present his proposed 2025 budget to Council and the public on December 5th.

Prepared and submitted by:
Tara Wong, CEO