

REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY OF OTTAWA-CARLETON
MUNICIPALITÉ RÉGIONALE D'OTTAWA-CARLETON

REPORT
RAPPORT

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DATE 5 November 1996

TO/DEST. Co-ordinator
Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee

FROM/EXP. Chief Administrative Officer

SUBJECT/OBJET **RESPONSE TO COUNCIL MOTION #198 -
REGION-WIDE LIBRARY SYSTEM**

DEPARTMENTAL RECOMMENDATION

That the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee and Council receive this report for information.

BACKGROUND

On April 17, 1996, the Ottawa-Carleton Mayors' Forum approved a report prepared by the Ottawa-Carleton Area CAOs entitled, Municipal Services Delivery Review. The report recommended area municipalities to undertake reviews of service delivery to explore possible joint initiatives in effort to become more cost effective. As a result, the area CAOs chose a number of issues to be reviewed in the short and long term. Library services was placed on the long term list of issues to be analysed by a municipal working group.

At the Council meeting of July 10, 1996, Council approved the report entitled, Review of Inter-Municipal Service Arrangements in the Ottawa-Carleton Area, with amendments. Approved motion number 198 amended the report to include a review of a region-wide library system.

DISCUSSION

The Ottawa-Carleton Area CAOs meet on a bi-monthly basis to discuss various issues affecting all area municipalities. As an avenue to commence a review on library services, this item was raised at the last meeting of the Area CAOs which was held at the City of Vanier on October 3rd.

As a result of a brief discussion on this matter, the review was referred to the area municipalities for analysis. It was noted that library services were not a regional responsibility but a local one and should be examined at this level. It was recommended that the review of library services include facilities and resources managed by area school boards and universities. Any proposed changes to the current structure should take into account the organization and responsibilities of these two additional groups.

CONCLUSION

The Area CAOs agreed to proceed with this review. No date has been set for completion of the study.

*Approved by
C.M. Beckstead*

RESPONSE TO COUNCIL MOTION #198 -
REGION-WIDE LIBRARY SYSTEM
- Chief Administrative Officer's report dated 5 Nov 96

Barbara Clubb, Chief Librarian, Ottawa Public Library stated she was speaking to the Committee as a member of the Chief Librarians of Ottawa-Carleton (CLOC) group as well as on behalf of the Library Forum which consists of the Chairs and CEOs of the 11 municipal libraries in the Region. Ms. Clubb advised that CLOC has been considering the issues set out in the staff report and it stands ready to assist in any studies and reviews that the Region and/or the municipalities might undertake. She noted the 11 public library systems in the Region currently work together in a number of areas but are aware there are an even greater number of things that could be done together.

Ms. Clubb emphasized the following points. First, the main library of the Ottawa Public Library serves a considerable Regional role in terms of the massive amount of reference and highly specialized material it has. She noted the main library seeks to make this information and resources as available as possible and pointed out there is no reason for this service to be duplicated in any of the other libraries in the Region. Secondly, although in current legislation, public libraries are a municipal responsibility, the CLOC and the Forum believe there is a role for the Region in the facilitation and equalization of services throughout the Region. Such things as collection, revenue generation, automated systems and services, sharing of technology, and improving the ways in which resources can be combined and shared, will be focused on in any studies the CLOC or Forum undertake and she felt any Regional studies, should also focus on these issues.

Councillor Hume referring to the recommendation in the Governance report (which was tabled), noted it stated "It is recommended that Library Services and education are proper responsibility of area municipalities and the educational authorities." He asked Ms. Clubb if she was suggesting the Region take a second look at this issue, as there may be a larger role for the Region to play. Ms. Clubb confirmed this was the message she wished to convey and advised that the Forum had recently written to Chair Clark in this regard.

Terry Murphy, Volunteer with the Nepean Public Library Board, advised his concerns related to the section of the Governance Report dealing with libraries (pages 152 and 153) rather than with the staff report dated 05 Nov 96. Mr. Murphy referring to the Governance report pointed out a number of areas which are contrary to what is stated in the *Public Libraries Act* (the Act). The speaker went on to provide the following examples. The Governance Report says the Mayor or Reeve must be a member whereas the Act does not. The Governance Report says the Public School Board shall appoint

three members, the Act says the Public School Board shall nominate two members. The Governance Report says the Separate School Board shall appoint two members, the Act says recommend one member. The Act also states that the appointing Municipal Council shall not appoint more of its members to the Library Board than one less than a majority of the Library Board (i.e. not a majority of Council members on the board). He noted the Governance Report is somewhat silent on this issue, but allows for only one Council member (i.e. the Mayor or Reeve) to be on the Board.

Mr. Murphy suggested the differences between the Act and the Governance Report indicate that either the author did not read the Act; read a pre-1984 version of the Act; or, read a report on libraries written by or for a body other than the Regional Municipality. He felt these differences cast doubt on the opinions and conclusions of the review on pages 152 and 153.

The speaker went on to say both the staff report and the Governance Report state library service levels should be determined at the local level. However, while the staff report says the matter has been referred to the area municipalities for analysis, the Governance Report concludes by making a number of recommendations none of which appear to follow the statement that library service levels should be determined at the local level.

Mr. Murphy noted that neither the Chair nor the CEO of the Nepean Public Library were informed of this review and he requested that in future, the Board Chairpersons of the 11 libraries be informed of any library studies undertaken by the Region. Mr. Murphy also felt the review should have acknowledged the existence of the Forum. In conclusion, Mr. Murphy asked that the Committee reject the two pages in the Governance Report (pages 152 and 153) as they are not to a standard that is acceptable.

Councillor Loney asked what the position of the Forum is with regard to one tier (Regional libraries) versus individual libraries, as he understood a motion was passed on this issue some months ago. Ms. Clubb advised motions were passed to request that the Forum be involved in the consultation and the development of strategies and solutions. She added the Forum is "positively disposed" to looking at areas of co-operation and co-operative services among the 11 libraries. Ms. Clubb felt the libraries' future lies with the future of their own municipalities and it would not be helpful to prejudge or act in advance of whatever happens to the municipalities in Ottawa-Carleton. Responding to further questions from Councillor Loney, Ms. Clubb advised that the non-resident fee that the Ottawa Library Board charges raises approximately \$140,000 per year; she felt it would be inconceivable to drop this charge unless funding could be replaced in some other way.

Councillor Hume asked Mr. Murphy if he felt the issue of library amalgamations or inter-library co-operation, deserves further study from a Regional perspective. Mr. Murphy agreed further study was warranted and stated also that the Forum should be involved.

The Committee then agreed to table the report for consideration at the meeting of 03 Dec 96.

That the Corporate Services and Economic Development Committee and Council receive this report for information.

TABLED