



## Manitoba Library Trustees Association

Box 590  
Erickson, Manitoba  
R0J 0P0

www.mlta.ca  
manitobalibrarytrusteesassn@gmail.com

---

June 6, 2016

### Question:

#### **What are the challenges faced by Manitoba public libraries when it comes to library funding and programming?**

In preparation for the MLTA Chair's meeting with Provincial Arts Branch and Public Library Services Branch staff, the question above was sent out to all public library boards. 21 responses were received, including 9 from individual trustees. This is a summary of the ideas submitted.

### Main Ideas

- 1. Libraries are evolving into community hubs and are no longer just a repository of books**
  - a. Programming, continuing education for the community
    - i. Technology use
    - ii. Literacy
    - iii. Arts – visual, music, authors
  - b. Community connections, partnerships, support, dialogue
  - c. Rate of evolution/transformation depends on mindset, personality, and willingness of staff (old school vs new, tech savvy)
  
- 2. Funding woes**, in particular, no increase to provincial max of \$8.50 per capita since 2004
  - a. Not taking into account inflation, COLA, etc
    - i. More and more spent on wages, less on materials
  - b. More burden/off-loading on local taxpayers, fundraising, seeking grants
    - i. PLS should inform libraries of grants, partnerships available from elsewhere
    - ii. Should be more grants from PLS (e.g. for programming)
  - c. Hindering progress, attracting and keeping staff
    - i. Low/uncompetitive wages
    - ii. More programming needs more staff, open more hours = more \$\$
  
- 3. Financial Sustainability**
  - a. Libraries are barely maintaining (status quo); not expanding (smaller systems)
  - b. Time to provide incentives to regionalize?
    - i. Economies of scale
    - ii. Audit costs
    - iii. Time to look at province-wide card with reciprocal borrowing privileges?

#### **4. Funding model/structure**

- a. Funding fairness/unfairness considerations – large urban, small rural, northern
  - i. Collection development – same amount no matter the size
  - ii. Technology grant – portioned out by population formula
- b. Consider base grant and per capita funding for lower/declining population areas
- c. Why are the local libraries who serve First Nations Communities not included in any federal funding towards literacy?
- d. Bilingual libraries – funding for French materials
- e. Timing of receipt of technology grant (should be sooner)

#### **5. Technology**

- a. Role of library is huge in providing citizens with access and instruction
- b. Quality and quantity of staff training
  - i. Should be mandated by PLS for fILL (Interlibrary loan system) and other required systems, stats, etc.
  - ii. Errors by employees causes difficulties elsewhere
    - 1. improve training – requirements, quality
  - iii. fILL requires more staff time for processing
- c. Overdrive license fees expensive for small single library
- d. Possible for a provincial license/contract for Ancestry Library Edition?
- e. Need postage subsidies for ILL (small library)
- f. Theoretically E-libraries can provide access to materials to all areas of the province, but connectivity in rural, remote areas nonexistent or inconsistent.
  - i. Federal promise to improve; starting down Hwy 75 and not interior or corner/remote border areas.

#### **6. Time for a new multi-year vision for libraries in Manitoba. (last one 2006)**

- a. Timing fits in well with Cultural Review process

#### **7. What further consultations are planned? (i.e. what direct contacts directly with public libraries)**

Presented to a planning session for the Provincial Cultural Review process  
on June 6, 2016 by  
Donna Kormilo, Chair  
Manitoba Library Trustees Association