1. DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST UNDER THE MUNICIPAL CONFLICT OF INTEREST ACT

2. REPORTS
   a) P-LIB-13-005, Results from Region of Waterloo Library Amnesty Week 1
   b) P-LIB-13-006, Signage for Library Branches 4

3. INFORMATION/CORRESPONDENCE
   a) Memo: Region of Waterloo Library Periodic Financial Report: January to August 2013 7
   b) Region of Waterloo Library Operations Highlights: April to September 2013 9

4. OTHER BUSINESS
   a) Proposed Library Committee Meeting Dates for 2014
   b) Council Enquiries and Requests for Information Tracking List 12

5. NEXT MEETING – December 3, 2013 (Note change of date)

6. ADJOURN
TO: Chair Todd Cowan and Members of the Library Committee

DATE: October 1, 2013

FILE CODE: R09-01

SUBJECT: RESULTS FROM REGION OF WATERLOO LIBRARY AMNESTY WEEK

RECOMMENDATION:
For Direction

SUMMARY:
At its May 28, 2013 meeting, Library Committee discussed Report No. P-LIB-13-004, Potential Use of Collection Agency, which described a potential approach to recovering long overdue library items or the associated fines and fees. The Committee directed RWL staff to first host an amnesty week in the summer and report outcomes. Amnesty Week was held August 27-31, and widely publicized. It resulted in the return of 14 long-overdue items, and another 24 items definitely declared lost. As a next step, Library Committee may wish to consider the free 90-day trial offered by Unique Management Service in order to compare with Amnesty Week.

REPORT:

Background
All materials loaned by Region of Waterloo Library (RWL) have standardized loan periods, most typically 3 weeks, or 1 week for Express items. When an item is not returned on time, RWL charges overdue fines of $0.25 per day for adults and $0.15 per day for children, to a maximum of $5 per item, as set out in the Region’s Fees and Charges By-law. While most patrons return their items or pay their fines on time, a number of them do not, which results in the need for RWL staff to contact patrons by telephone and/or mail in an attempt to recover the overdue materials. Items not returned are assessed the replacement cost and an administrative fee. As of August 26, 2013, 1271 items were identified as “lost”, or more than 60 days overdue, to a total replacement cost of over $24,000 and administrative fees of $7,030.

Amnesty Week Promotion and Advertising
Amnesty week was promoted in all library branches with posters and staff word-of-mouth. Paid advertisements were placed in the Woolwich Observer, Elmira Independent, Ayr News, and New Hamburg Independent, at a total cost of $547. RWL and the Region both issued press releases, and media inquiries came from a Brantford radio station and CBC Kitchener-Waterloo. Promotion was also placed on RWL’s Facebook and Twitter pages.

In some cases, if RWL staff believed that a patron would be likely to return to the library if he/she knew about Amnesty Week, the patron was contacted. Many long-overdue accounts, however, have moved or changed phone number. RWL staff did not pursue those accounts.
Amnesty Week Results

Between August 27 and Aug 31, eleven patrons returned a total of 14 long-overdue items, totalling $180.80 in replacement costs, and $75 in processing fees.

A further 24 items were written off because patrons communicated that they would like to return them but cannot because the items were lost. These totalled $276.57 in replacements and $125 in processing fees.

To treat current patrons in general good standing fairly and equitably, RWL also forgave all fines for any overdue item returned during Amnesty Week. 1278 minor overdue fines were forgiven, at a value of $1315.70. These are the types of fines that would also be forgiven during Food for Fines Week in October, but with the community benefit of a Food Bank donation.

Current Outstanding Accounts

Currently, $74,851 in overdue fees, fines, and lost item charges is owing to RWL. Included in this amount is $24,583 specifically for the replacement cost of the 1271 lost items, an average cost of $19 per item. A significantly larger number of items have been returned, but overdue fines are still owing. Although the average fine owing works out to less than $2 per item, the range of amounts is 15 cents to over $100.

In total, 326 users have fines and fees of $50 or more. They collectively have lost 899 items valued at almost $8,941, and owe a combined total of $37,407 in fees and fines.

The following table also splits the amounts owing into two time periods, in the event that “writing off” older fines and lost items is a consideration. It is important to note that these amounts owing are not included in the Library Operating Budget, but any fines/fees recovered would be counted as revenue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bill Date</th>
<th># of items</th>
<th>Bill Reason</th>
<th>$ amount owing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prior to Jan.1, 2012</td>
<td>942</td>
<td>Lost Items</td>
<td>16,228+Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>15,505</td>
<td>Returned but Fines owing</td>
<td>36,186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan.1/12 to Aug.26/13 (20 months)</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>Lost items</td>
<td>8,355+Admin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11,118</td>
<td>Returned but Fines owing</td>
<td>14,082</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$74,851</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next Steps

While Amnesty Week created some goodwill among patrons, and saw moderate success with the return of 14 long-overdue items, the cost in advertising and staff time was well over the dollar value of the items recovered. The rate of return is too low to make this a viable long-term solution for the recovery of overdue materials and fines.

Each of the municipal libraries within Waterloo Region, with the exception of RWL, employs the services of a collection agency. Feedback from those libraries is that the services are efficient, and that the amounts recovered are greater than the costs associated. The use of collection agencies provides accountability to the public that patrons who borrow library materials and choose not to return them will be held responsible.
Library Committee may now wish to consider the free 90-day trial offered by Unique Management Service (UMS) in order to compare those results with the results of Amnesty Week. Parameters could be established about the accounts that would be referred to UMS; for example accounts exceeding $50, and not exceeding two years old.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

This initiative supports the Service Excellence Objective of the Corporate Strategic Plan, Action 5.3, “Ensure Regional programs and services are efficient and effective and demonstrate accountability to the public.”

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The cost of advertising Amnesty Week was $547 and there were no associated revenues, although fines and fees associated with lost materials returned or accounted for amounted to about the same value. There would be no cost to RWL in proceeding with the UMS free 90-day trial.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

Finance and Council and Administrative Services have been consulted in the writing of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

NIL

PREPARED BY:  Kelly Bernstein, Manager, Information Services

APPROVED BY:  Rob Horne, Commissioner, Planning, Housing & Community Services
TO: Chair Todd Cowan and Members of the Library Committee

DATE: October 1, 2013

FILE CODE: R09-01

SUBJECT: SIGNAGE FOR LIBRARY BRANCHES

RECOMMENDATION:

For direction.

SUMMARY:

Electronic signage is an effective method to raise awareness of the library branches, and to highlight hours, programs and services. In the Proposed 2012 RWL Budget Report,No. P-LIB-11-007 dated December 6, 2011, one-time funding totaling $45,000 was included in the Capital Budget to investigate and implement external electronic signage at the branches.

To date, electronic “OPEN” signs have been installed at each branch. This signage enables the passing public to more easily see that a branch is open. Staff has also investigated options and prices for large format stand-alone electronic signs. For these, each branch is unique in terms of available space to locate a sign, Township zoning and sign by-laws, and cost of cabling for electricity and data. However, it appears that $15,000 plus permits and cabling would be a typical cost estimate for each sign.

Alternatives to stand-alone electronic signs have subsequently been considered. These include: finding other locations (such as existing or planned electronic sign-boards in the community) to display library information; installing digital screens inside the library (in some locations, these might also be visible from the exterior); and installing directional road signs to library branches. In combination, these initiatives could raise awareness of library locations and services for all RWL branches. This would achieve the original intent of the electronic signage proposal, but for more locations, and potentially lower cost.

REPORT:

In the development of the 2012 RWL budget, Library Committee included one-time funding for exterior electronic signs at branches. Report P-LIB-11-007 stated:

“Electronic signs for messaging would improve visibility and expand marketing capabilities. Branch hours and programs, for example, could be promoted. While the signs would need a consistent look, each site is unique, so work is needed to assess site-specific location, cost and constraints; this would be undertaken in consultation with Township staff. It is recommended that this be a multi-year project, with a few sites being done each year.”
An amount of $45,000 was included in the Capital Budget, intended to be implemented as $15,000 in 2012, 2013 and 2014.

As a first step, recently all branches had a new electronic “OPEN” sign installed. This signage enables the passing public to more easily see that a branch is open. Three branches, in Ayr, Elmira and New Hamburg, have electronic signs that also include library hours. These branches have a consecutive block of open hours each day. The remaining branches have split schedules, and there are no commercially-available electronic signs that provide for this.

To obtain price estimates for large format electronic signs, RWL staff contacted three local companies in Kitchener, Cambridge and Stratford which have previously provided outdoor digital signs for Region of Waterloo, Township of Wilmot and Township of Woolwich. (North Dumfries Township contracted with a company in Walkerton; a few components of their sign came from companies in Hamilton and Stratford.)

Preliminary cost estimates range from $8500 to $15000 per sign. The total cost is dependent on size of sign, colour, shape, pitch, resolution, and architectural design. Specific details per branch are needed for accurate price estimates. Taxes, engineering design, permits, and cabling would be additional costs. Each Township has specific zoning and sign by-laws to be followed; given the building location of some of our branches it could be difficult to find space to install a stand-alone sign.

In summary, large format digital signs may not be a cost-effective approach to achieving better visibility for library branches, and promotion of programs, hours and services.

As a result, a number of alternative options have been considered, including partnerships with other community organizations, interior digital screens, and directional road signs. These options are further described below.

Community Partnerships: At the same time as RWL investigates electronic signage, others in the community are considering them as well, which may offer opportunities for partnerships in future. This includes local municipalities and service clubs. Such signs would potentially be more visible and centrally located than ones directly in front of a library branch. Protocols would need to be developed to determine how content is written and managed and cost-sharing arrangements would have to be negotiated.

Interior digital screens: Essentially a TV monitor, these screens would be easier and less expensive to install, so that each branch could be included. In some locations, they could be seen from outside the branch. Content can be developed centrally and could include library, community, Township and Regional information. These screens would be similar to those installed at the Waterloo Region Museum, the Airport, and Cambridge Public Libraries.

Directional road signs: While not electronic, road signs with the RWL identifier provide a tool for way-finding and directing community members to the libraries. Currently there is just one road sign, which is in St. Jacobs. Installing signs throughout the community to direct people to the libraries is also a good method to highlight library service.

In conclusion, there are several options for new signage for the Region of Waterloo Library, including electronic signage. The cost and location issues associated with large electronic signs suggest it is not an effective use of budget at this time to purchase signs. Community partnerships, interior digital screens, and directional road signs may achieve the same
objectives, at lower overall cost. It is proposed that staff continue to pursue the alternatives, and if appropriate, include an adjustment to the capital budget in the upcoming draft 2014 budget report.

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLAN:

Improving the visibility of RWL branches through better signage supports the Strategic Focus Area 5: Service Excellence, Objective 5.5: Improve awareness of Regional services.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

The approved 2013 RWL Capital Budget includes $45,000 for exterior branch signage over the 2013 - 2014 timeframe. To date, none of this budget has been spent. Based on the further research summarized in this report, this budget would only be sufficient to provide new exterior electronic signage at a few branches, and this may not be the most effective approach. As a result, it is proposed that the issue of electronic signage at RWL branches be referred to the 2014 budget process for further discussion.

OTHER DEPARTMENT CONSULTATIONS/CONCURRENCE:

Finance staff were consulted in the development of this report.

ATTACHMENTS

NIL

PREPARED BY: Katherine Seredynska, Manager, Public Services

APPROVED BY: Rob Horne, Commissioner, Planning, Housing & Community Services
MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Todd Cowan and Members of the Library Committee

From: Lucille Bish, Director, Community Services

Subject: REGION OF WATERLOO LIBRARY PERIODIC FINANCIAL REPORT: JANUARY TO AUGUST 2013

File No: R09-01

This memo provides the Region of Waterloo Library financial report for the January to August, 2013 reporting period.

As shown on the following, total expenditures to date are 5% less than the year-to-date budget. The under-expenditure in staffing and operating costs relates, in part, to the timing of implementing recommendations from the Service Plan Review. For example, the new branch hours which increase the staff hours, begin on October 1, 2013. Revenue from fines and desk receipts are slightly under the year-to-date budget; this is off-set by revenues from programs and other sources.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL LIBRARY EXPENDITURES</th>
<th>Annual</th>
<th>Y-T-D</th>
<th>Y-T-D</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>% Variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Staffing Costs</td>
<td>1,783,490</td>
<td>1,188,984</td>
<td>1,136,932</td>
<td>52,052</td>
<td>4.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Operating Costs</td>
<td>513,960</td>
<td>355,109</td>
<td>321,184</td>
<td>33,925</td>
<td>9.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Inter-Departmental / Transfers</td>
<td>146,819</td>
<td>97,880</td>
<td>109,396</td>
<td>(11,516)</td>
<td>(11.77)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</td>
<td>2,444,269</td>
<td>1,641,973</td>
<td>1,567,512</td>
<td>74,461</td>
<td>4.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>REGIONAL LIBRARY REVENUES</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Township Property Tax Levy</td>
<td>(2,296,695)</td>
<td>(1,543,581)</td>
<td>(1,543,581)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grants</td>
<td>(106,574)</td>
<td>(71,048)</td>
<td>(69,291)</td>
<td>(1,757)</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fines and Damages</td>
<td>(27,750)</td>
<td>(18,500)</td>
<td>(16,939)</td>
<td>(1,561)</td>
<td>8.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Desk Receipts</td>
<td>(4,500)</td>
<td>(3,000)</td>
<td>(2,770)</td>
<td>(230)</td>
<td>7.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programs and Events</td>
<td>(2,000)</td>
<td>(1,344)</td>
<td>(2,684)</td>
<td>1,340</td>
<td>(99.70)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Operating Revenues</td>
<td>(6,750)</td>
<td>(4,500)</td>
<td>(9,603)</td>
<td>5,103</td>
<td>(113.40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL REVENUES</td>
<td>(2,444,269)</td>
<td>(1,641,973)</td>
<td>(1,644,868)</td>
<td>2,895</td>
<td>(0.18)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NET REGIONAL LIBRARY</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(77,356)</td>
<td>77,356</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
MEMORANDUM

To: Chair Todd Cowan and Members of the Library Committee

From: Katherine Seredynska, Manager, Public Services
Kelly Bernstein, Manager, Information Services

Subject: REGION OF WATERLOO LIBRARY OPERATIONS HIGHLIGHTS: APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2013

File No: R09-01

Programs and Services

Go! TD Summer Reading Club had over 1640 children register, read and participate in fun activities. 183 programs were presented, including weekly storytimes, drop-in crafts, and entertainers. Region of Waterloo Library received donations of reading club prizes from the local community and beyond. Children read over 32,000 books in July and August.

New programs for babies (Elmira) and one year olds (Wellesley) will be introduced this fall. There is growing community interest in programs for very young children as junior kindergarten rolls out across the Region.

Let’s Read, a family literacy program, was launched at Word on the Street on September 21. Families are encouraged to read Snow Day! by Werner Zimmermann. He will visit local communities this fall.

In September, One Book, One Community welcomed to the Region Richard Wagamese, author of Ragged Company. RWL hosted a reading at Waterloo-Oxford DSS and welcomed 140 students and community members.

Marketing and Promotions

New promotional materials for summer reading club programs were designed and introduced this year, which received very positive feedback from staff and the public.

Colourful new brochures were created for the RWL Service Plan, Hours and Locations, and new e-services.

New hours signage and magnets, with new branch hours by township, will be available in September.
Buildings

Ayr: New energy efficient replacement hanging lights were installed at the library.

Elmira: A fireproof bookdrop bin was created and installed by Woolwich Township staff.

New Hamburg: The children’s department is being renovated to create a better program space.

New Dundee: A meeting has been held with the architect and Wilmot township staff, with summer 2014 as a target date for project completion.

St. Jacobs: New landscaping has improved the gardens.

Staff

RWL received a grant of $2154.60 from Human Resources Development Canada for a student, Children’s Programs this summer. Our student was instrumental to the success of summer reading club by offering weekly programs across RWL, supporting staff and promoting the program.

Staff have attended seniors events, local fairs, home shows and kindergarten registrations to promote library services. This connection with the community helps highlight new services and attract new users.

Several staff are furthering their knowledge of library services through webinars or attendance at workshops on topics like children’s programs or social media and libraries, taking distance courses like Advanced EXCEL, or college or university courses on library management.

RWL has over 85 volunteers –youth and adults- who give their time to support library services. They help with collections, displays and programs. They were recognized during National Volunteer Week in April, and six were awarded Volunteer Service awards by the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration.

Website and Online Communications

This summer eNewsletters were launched to the public. The inaugural “RWL News” was sent out on August 30th, and a children’s newsletter will go out in September. Anyone can sign up through our website, rwlibrary.ca

Development continues on the library’s main website as well as the online catalogue. “New on the Shelf” links were added to the website, and an attractive book scroller of cover images displays on the catalogue. The website now has the ability to add more graphics and buttons.

Our Facebook and Twitter accounts have been consistently popular. A Pinterest page is still in the building stage.

Library Computers and Technology

Most staff computers were replaced in August under the Region’s computer replacement cycle. The new machines are significantly faster and staff have expressed appreciation. The public computers will be replaced by ITS in the fall.
Statistics /Reporting

Both OMBI and Annual Survey reports for 2012 were completed in August. RWL’s overall circulation is up 3.65% and electronic use (catalogue, ebooks and databases) are up 17%. 2013 ebook use is up more than 25% from 2012. The RWL Budget for ebooks was increased by $5,000 through the 2013 budget, and a one-time grant of $3,845 announced by the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Sport in June is also being used for e-resources.

Collections

A downloadable music service called Freegal (free and legal) was introduced in August. Initial feedback from patrons has been very positive.

Express Magazines, 1 week loans for the current issue, were started in July. Patrons have indicated that they appreciate the chance to receive new magazines faster than before.

Express Reads are being introduced this September. These are additional copies of bestseller titles that are available for 1 week loan periods. Reaction to the other Express collections has been positive, and we anticipate that demand for Express Reads will be high.

Computer Training

Computer training was provided to the public through the spring. This proved extremely popular, with waiting lists being created in several branches. The Coordinator, Computer Training’s contract ended in June 2013, and it has now been posted as a permanent position. Interviews will take place soon.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Meeting date</th>
<th>Requestor</th>
<th>Request</th>
<th>Assigned Department</th>
<th>Anticipated Response Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27-Nov-12</td>
<td>Library Committee</td>
<td>That staff acquire contractor quotes for all branch signs for both digital and mobile formats and report back mid-2013 with the proposals and estimates.</td>
<td>PH&amp;CS</td>
<td>May-2013</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>