



200 Ontario St.
Cobourg, ON
K9A 5P4

Tel: 905 372-9271

Fax: 905 372-4538

www.cobourg.library.on.ca

Town of Cobourg Council
Victoria Hall
55 King Street West
Cobourg, ON
K9A 2M2

October 29, 2020

Members of Town of Cobourg Council:

RE: Cobourg Public Library MOU

The Cobourg Public Library Board would firstly like to commend Council for its collective performance during the pandemic thus far. COVID-19 continues to impact many facets of daily life, and it is a comfort to know that council is looking after the best interests of our community as whole.

In February 2020, Councillor Adam Bureau brought forward a motion to council to have the Town of Cobourg staff and the Cobourg Public Library Board finalize a Memorandum of Understanding to clearly define the roles and responsibilities of the Town vs the Library. More specifically, the MOU would define the responsibilities regarding the maintenance and decision making where the facilities are concerned.

The MOU was to be finalized by June 1, 2020. However, with the pandemic, the Library Board understands that the MOU became less of a priority during the state of emergency, and the ongoing difficult times our world finds itself in.

Recently we've had a situation where the ambiguous facilities responsibilities was perfectly illustrated. On August 7th, 2020, a heating and cooling unit for the Rotary Room ceased to function. We called building maintenance, and they determined the issue would require a HVAC technician to service the unit. The library administration team was instructed to contact the usual contractor to service the unit.

The contractor did not reply to repeated contact from the team, leading to the eventual termination of the service contract on October 22, 2020.

In the meantime, the Library was without heating and cooling in the Rotary Room. This might not seem like a large concern given the time of year, however it has been quite cold in the room, and the Library has staff working in the area to sustain the contactless pick up service.

For you -



During the nearly three months while the situation with the contractor was playing out, the administration team reached out repeatedly to the Town of Cobourg, hoping for some assistance in moving forward.

The Library Administration team has been instructed by Town of Cobourg staff to put the service contract for the facilities at the C. Gordon King Centre out for tender.

As we are sure you can understand, the Team is not well versed in the maintenance and repair needs of an HVAC system, nor do they have a basis of understanding of what would be an appropriate expense to agree to for service. While the Town's Building Maintenance department has been helpful in describing the tendering process, and providing general information of what to anticipate from HVAC contractors, having the Library procure the contract does not necessarily seem appropriate as the building is the purview of the Town.

The relationship between the Library and the Town of Cobourg has steadily improved over the past few years, particularly where facilities and maintenance are concerned. There have been many definitions regarding what the Town is responsible for, and what the Library is responsible for. However, these definitions have been casual in nature, often verbal, and sometimes change depending on the area of the building in question.

We would like to request that council consider the original motion made on February 18, 2020, to have an MOU between the Town of Cobourg and the Cobourg Public Library Board be finalized by June 1, 2020, and an amendment to have the MOU finalized by March 1, 2021.

Clear definitions of roles and responsibilities would greatly assist with determining budgets going forward, as well as providing a safe and comfortable facility for our staff and community.

Respectfully,

Kevin Caldwell (Electronic Signature)

Kevin Caldwell
Board Chair, Cobourg Public Library