

# CITY OF HAMILTON

## MOTION

Council: November 13, 2019

**MOVED BY COUNCILLOR J. PARTRIDGE .....**

**SECONDED BY COUNCILLOR T. JACKSON.....**

**Canadian Urban Library Council's Campaign on to Increase Access to Digital Publications (e-Books) for Library Users in Hamilton and Across Canada**

WHEREAS, the Hamilton Library Board ("Board") at its meeting of September 18, 2019, approved a resolution (attached hereto as Appendix "A"), in which the Board endorsed the Government Relations Campaign on Accessing Digital Publications lead by the Canadian Urban Library Council; and, directed the Chief Librarian/CEO to request the City of Hamilton endorse the campaign to send a communication to the appropriate elected officials and candidates (local MPs) (attached hereto as Appendix "B");

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton recognizes the important role that libraries play in our community and the early literacy programs that they run are integral to developing proficient readers and ensuring that children succeed in school;

WHEREAS, more and more, digital literacy programs run by libraries also help ensure that residents can contribute to our digital world. Additionally, vulnerable demographic groups, including seniors, low income families, youth, and new Canadians rely on access to libraries as an important tool for their participation in the community from education to searching for jobs to consuming Canadian cultural materials;

WHEREAS, libraries in our community recognize that our users increasingly seek to access digital publications offered by multinational publishers, and that access to those publications is too curtailed by prohibitively high licensing fees or else entirely denied to Canadian libraries; and,

WHEREAS, libraries must be in a position to offer digital publications to their users as part of their service offering to our community, particularly given the contemporary rapid pace of digitization of educational and cultural materials;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

- (a) That the City of Hamilton support the Canadian Urban Libraries Council in its efforts to increase access to digital publications for library users in Hamilton and across Canada;
- (b) That correspondence be sent to all local Ministers of Parliament (MPs) to call on the Federal government to investigate the barriers faced by libraries in acquiring digital publications and the problems that poses for vulnerable demographic groups in Canada; and,
- (c) That the City of Hamilton further ask the Federal government to develop a solution that increases access to digital publications across Canada and assists libraries in meeting the cost requirements to acquire digital publications.



55 York Blvd  
P.O. Box 2700  
Hamilton, ON L8N 4E4

t. 905.546.3200  
hpl.ca

🐦 @HamiltonLibrary  
f /Hamiltonpubliclibrary

October 3, 2019

Ms. Stephanie Paparella  
Legislative Assistant  
City Clerks Department, City of Hamilton  
71 Main Street West, 1st Floor  
Hamilton, ON L8P 4Y5

Dear Ms. Paparella:

Further to our discussion, I am providing you with the motion that was passed at the Hamilton Public Library Board's meeting of Wednesday, September 18, 2019.

MOVED by Vikki Cecchetto, seconded by John Kirkpatrick,

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD ENDORSE THE GOVERNMENT RELATIONS CAMPAIGN ON  
ACCESSING DIGITAL PUBLICATIONS LEAD BY THE CANADIAN URBAN LIBRARY COUNCIL (CULC).

THAT THE LIBRARY BOARD DIRECT THE CHIEF LIBRARIAN/CEO TO REQUEST THE CITY OF  
HAMILTON ENDORSE THE CAMPAIGN AND SEND COMMUNICATION TO APPROPRIATE ELECTED  
OFFICIALS AND CANDIDATES.

MOTION Passed

I am therefore requesting, on behalf of the Hamilton Public Library Board, that Council consider this motion. Councillor Partridge has agreed to move with Councillor Jackson agreeing to second it. Below is a draft motion to assist with the development of the motion to be presented to Council.

**Draft Municipal Motion**

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton recognizes the important role that libraries play in our community and the early literacy programs that they run are integral to developing proficient readers and ensuring that children succeed in school. More and more, digital literacy programs run by libraries also help ensure that residents can contribute to our digital world. Additionally, vulnerable demographic groups, including seniors, low income families, youth, and new Canadians rely on access to libraries as an important tool for their participation in the community from education to searching for jobs to consuming Canadian cultural materials, and

WHEREAS, libraries in our community recognize that our users increasingly seek to access digital publications offered by multinational publishers, and that access to those publications is too often curtailed by prohibitively high licensing fees or else entirely denied to Canadian libraries, and

are integral to developing proficient readers and ensuring that children succeed in school. Digital literacy programs also help ensure that citizens can contribute to our digital world.

- Digital content has unique benefits that allows community members who can't easily get to the library, such as seniors, low income families, youth, and new Canadians, to participate more fully in their communities

Your consideration of this matter would be most appreciated. Please advise if you require additional action on my part. Attached is the Library Board Report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Paul Takala". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Paul" written in a larger, more prominent script than the last name "Takala".

Paul Takala  
Chief Librarian/CEO

CC. Councillor Tom Jackson  
Councillor Judy Partridge  
Councillor Maria Pearson  
City Manager, Janette Smith,  
Library Board Chair, Lori-Anne Spence Smith



## Appendix I: Draft Municipal Motion

Draft Municipal Motion,

WHEREAS, the City of Hamilton recognizes the important role that libraries play in our community and the early literacy programs that they run are integral to developing proficient readers and ensuring that children succeed in school. More and more, digital literacy programs run by libraries also help ensure that residents can contribute to our digital world. Additionally, vulnerable demographic groups, including seniors, low income families, youth, and new Canadians rely on access to libraries as an important tool for their participation in the community from education to searching for jobs to consuming Canadian cultural materials, and

WHEREAS, libraries in our community recognize that our users increasingly seek to access digital publications offered by multinational publishers, and that access to those publications is too often curtailed by prohibitively high licensing fees or else entirely denied to Canadian libraries, and

WHEREAS, libraries must be in a position to offer digital publications to their users as part of their service offering to our community, particularly given the contemporary rapid pace of digitization of educational and cultural materials,

Now, therefore be it resolved that the City of Hamilton does hereby:

1. Indicate our support for the Canadian Urban Libraries Council in its efforts to increase access to digital publications for library users in Hamilton and across Canada;
2. Call on the Federal government to investigate the barriers faced by libraries in acquiring digital publications and the problems that poses for vulnerable demographic groups in Canada; and
3. Further ask the Federal government to develop a solution that increases access to digital publications across Canada and assists libraries in meeting the cost requirements to acquire digital publications.



**Date:** September 18, 2019  
**To:** Chair and Members of the Board  
**From:** Lisa Radha Weaver, Director Collections and Program Development  
 Paul Takala, Chief Librarian/CEO  
**Subject:** E-Book Advocacy Statement - LW/PT - Attachment #10.3

#### RECOMMENDATION:

That the Library Board endorse the Government Relations Campaign on Accessing Digital Publications lead by the Canadian Urban Library Council (CULC).

That the Library Board direct the Chief Librarian/CEO to request the City of Hamilton endorse the campaign and send communication to appropriate elected officials and candidates.

#### FINANCIAL/STAFFING/LEGAL IMPLICATIONS:

CULC is seeking assistance in increasing government and stakeholder awareness of the barriers libraries face in acquiring digital content. Through the Government Relations Campaign on Accessing Digital Publications, launched in June 2019, CULC is working with governments on a solution that would benefit library users and Canadian authors. By participating in the campaign, the Board can continue to play a leadership role in digital content advocacy in order to support cost effectiveness and access to collections in support of lifelong learning and literacy.

#### BACKGROUND:

Hamilton Public Library as an active member of Canadian Urban Library Council has participated in both the #eContentForLibraries and eOne Read Canada campaigns this year.

Barriers to accessing digital content for libraries continue to grow due to licensing models which include embargoes [different release days for libraries] and exclusives [content not available to libraries]. The current barriers around digital content causing concern for libraries are:

1. Restrictive pricing models of eBooks and eAudio from the five largest multinational publishers; Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins, MacMillan, Penguin Random House and Simon & Schuster; and
2. The limited access Canadian libraries have to eAudio including eAudio by prominent Canadian authors.

CULC was incorporated in 2008 to improve library service in Canada's urban areas through research, advocacy and knowledge transfer. CULC members are made up of over forty large urban libraries in Canada. CULC members spend approximately \$100 million in public funds annually on library acquisitions; and increasingly struggle to obtain digital content [eBooks and eAudio] from multinational publishers.

On January 14, 2019 a social media campaign was launched by CULC to continue the efforts to lobby for equitable access and flexible, affordable pricing for eBooks and eAudio. Over 700 customers from Hamilton participated in the campaign. The campaign was a call to action to demand better access and terms from the five multinational publishers: Hachette Book Group, HarperCollins, MacMillan, Penguin Random House and Simon & Schuster.

CULC would like to secure government support to eliminate the barriers libraries face in accessing digital content. This campaign aims to raise awareness at the Federal level to this issue prior to the October election.

CULC will be reaching out to engage key policy makers in discussions as well as engaging all major party candidates during the Federal election campaign this Fall. CULC will be asking policy makers and candidates to participate in a social media campaign pledging their support for libraries to have the resources to build their collections;

CULC will be presenting a policy solution to the access issues to the Federal government immediately following the election in October, seeking a funding allocation in the 2020 budget for libraries including data that shows publishers that library cooperation supports book sales.

#### ATTACHMENTS:

Description	Upload Date	Type
<u><a href="#">eContent Draft Resolution &amp; Letter</a></u>	9/18/2019	Cover Memo

WHEREAS, libraries must be in a position to offer digital publications to their users as part of their service offering to our community, particularly given the contemporary rapid pace of digitization of educational and cultural materials,

Now, therefore be it resolved that the City of Hamilton does hereby:

1. Indicate our support for the Canadian Urban Libraries Council in its efforts to increase access to digital publications for library users in Hamilton and across Canada;
2. Call on the Federal government to investigate the barriers faced by libraries in acquiring digital publications and the problems that poses for vulnerable demographic groups in Canada; and
3. Further ask the Federal government to develop a solution that increases access to digital publications across Canada and assists libraries in meeting the cost requirements to acquire digital publications.

#### **Additional Background Information**

- Members of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council / Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CULC/CBUC) spend approximately \$112 million in public funds annually on library collections.
- The Hamilton Public Library spent \$3 million on physical collections and \$1 million on digital collections in 2018 –\$800K of which was spent specifically on eBooks and eAudiobooks
- Even with our significant expenditure, we increasingly struggle to obtain e-content from multinational publishers due to a combination of pricing issues and restrictive licensing models that are unique to eBooks and eAudiobooks.
- In order to properly serve our communities – including vulnerable groups like seniors, lower income individuals, and youth at risk– we need to ensure that all Canadians have timely access to digital content.
- Multinational publishers (collectively known as the “Big 5”), primarily headquartered outside Canada, are limiting Canadian libraries’ access to eContent. Even when a publication is made available, the “Big 5” are making it prohibitively expensive to acquire eContent. For example, Canadian author Louise Penny’s book, *A Better Man*, is available to libraries for \$22 in hard cover, for \$60 in eBook, and for \$81.50 in eAudio. The \$60 ebook cost allows the book to be checked out electronically 52 times or for 2 years – whichever happens first. A paper edition would be expected to last 3 to 4 years at just over a third of the cost.
- This has been an issue for many years, but recently the problem has worsened with publishers further limiting access and embargoing content for public libraries. The resulting business model is financially unsustainable for libraries and detrimental to free and equitable access to information for the public.
- Licensing restrictions and high costs make it difficult for libraries to provide invaluable services that contribute to thriving and engaged communities. Public libraries and the programs that they provide

## Draft Letter to Federal Members of Parliament

Dear

I am writing on behalf of the public libraries in the City of Hamilton which provide an essential service and are essential parts of our communities.

Libraries and the early literacy programs that they run are integral to developing proficient readers and ensuring that kids succeed in school. More and more, digital literacy programs run by public libraries also help ensure that citizens can contribute to our digital world. Additionally, for many seniors, lower income families, youth, and new Canadians our public libraries provide access to information they may not otherwise be able to obtain.

Members of the Canadian Urban Libraries Council (CULC)/Conseil des Bibliothèques Urbaines du Canada (CBUC) spend approximately \$100 million in public funds annually on library acquisitions. In Hamilton we are spending \$3.2 million every year in our 22 library branches to ensure that we acquire publications and other resources in demand by library users.

Even with this significant expenditure, we increasingly struggle to obtain digital publications from multinational publishers, due to other cost pressures we face locally and because of the often strict licensing limitations applied to digital publications. By way of example, Canadian author Louise Penny's book *Kingdom of the Blind* is available to libraries for \$13 as a paperback, \$22 in hard cover and \$60 in digital form. The \$60 cost would allow the book to be checked out electronically 52 times or for 2 years - whichever happens first. A paper edition would be expected to last 3 to 4 years at a substantially reduced cost. The book is currently not available to Canadian libraries in any e-audio format.

The critical problem is that multinational publishers are limiting access to digital publications by Canadian libraries, and, even when a publication is made available, are making it prohibitively expensive to acquire most digital publications.

If we can not correctly serve library users and provide access to digital publications, our community will suffer. The lack of access to digital publications is a problem we feel governments need to be aware of and help us develop solutions for - especially as governments seek to identify community tools that can help vulnerable groups grow and reach their potential.

Along with other CULC/CBUC members across Canada, we are asking the Federal government to recognize the critical role that libraries play in serving priority groups in our communities. Libraries do this by providing access to materials that allow community members to learn and grow. The Federal government has a vital role to play in ensuring that Canadian libraries can meet the growing demand for digital publications. We ask you to prioritize finding a solution for the barriers that Canadian libraries face in accessing digital publications.

I would be happy to further discuss these concerns with you at your convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Takala  
Chief Librarian/CEO  
Hamilton Public Library

Lori-Anne Spence Smith  
Library Board Chair  
Hamilton Public Library