

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM45.4	ACTION			Ward:All
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Public Library Access to E-Books and E-Magazines - by Councillor Paul Ainslie, seconded by Councillor Jaye Robinson

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Community Development and Recreation Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Paul Ainslie, seconded by Councillor Jaye Robinson, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Department of Canadian Heritage and the Ontario Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Sport to investigate publishers' restrictive practices in making e-books and e-magazines available to public libraries, including the higher prices charged to public libraries.

Summary

The proliferation of e-book devices and the increased availability of e-content have led to a greater number of Torontonians wanting to borrow e-books and e-magazines from their public library. Demand has grown significantly at Toronto Public Library (TPL) with use surpassing one million in 2012, which represents an increase of 105 per cent over 2011, and this trend is continuing in 2013. Recently, TPL made e-magazines available for borrowing for the first time and Torontonians quickly responded borrowing magazines for their tablets and other devices. This trend in use and demand at public libraries is international in scope. Despite this, public libraries face many challenges in making e-books and e-magazines available because publishers either will not sell their content to public libraries or place special conditions such as significantly higher prices. Over the past 18 months, progress has been made with more publishers making their content available. However, some e-book pricing and distribution restrictions continue to make it difficult for Toronto Public Library to serve Torontonians. This situation with publishers places pressures on Toronto Public Library's collections budget and restricts Torontonians' access to content from their public library.

The Toronto Public Library Board is committed to providing Toronto residents with equitable and accessible public library service that provides universal access to a broad range of human knowledge, information and ideas in all its forms. Refusing to sell e-books or e-magazines to public libraries or imposing other terms that unreasonably increase costs undermines Toronto Public Library's ability to serve Torontonians and are not the answer to a healthy publishing industry.

This Motion endorses the important role of public libraries in making content available to all Torontonians and encourages publishers to make e-books and e-magazines available to public libraries on fair and reasonable terms.

(Submitted to City Council on December 16 and 17, 2013 as MM45.4)

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM45.4