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Regina Public Library not requesting mill rate increase

The Regina Public Library (RPL) Board of Directors will not approach Regina City Council to request a mill rate increase to supplement its 2017 budget. The decision was made Wednesday night.

“We have significant budget challenges but our Board has decided that we will not be pursuing a mill rate change request,” Quinlan said. “Our customers are also feeling the effects of the recent budget and we don’t want to place any additional burden on them.”

Quinlan feels that RPL can find ways to adjust to the current budget reductions but cuts of this nature are not sustainable over the long term.

“We’ve made adjustments that will accommodate the shortfall through a planned and careful approach to our spending for the remainder of the year,” Quinlan said. “All told, the change in revenue for RPL is a deficit of \$667,369.”

The budget decisions will impact public services provided by RPL. Previously known for sharing their richness of services province wide, the budget cuts have forced RPL to make the needs of Regina residents a priority over other communities.

“Unfortunately, we must narrow our focus and limit the sharing of our resources with other libraries across the province,” Quinlan said. “That is contrary to what we believe a library should be – a welcoming centre of learning and literacy for everyone.”

RPL believes it will have enough flexibility with work currently being done by term employees to assure that the economic livelihood of permanent employees will not be affected.

As well, the cancellation of the Literacy and Aboriginal services grants in the provincial budget has forced the RPL Board to make some tough decisions on these two important community programs.

According to Quinlan, the elimination of the Aboriginal services grant will mean a reduction in both the number and type of cultural programs RPL will offer moving forward. In addition, the Literacy program will also have to be reviewed and restructured due to the removal of its service grant.

RPL will be hosting two information sessions regarding the effects of the cuts on Regina’s public library and the Saskatchewan libraries system. The sessions will be April 12 & 13 at 7:30pm in the Central Library mezzanine, 2311 – 12th Avenue.

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