To: Toronto Public Library Board – November 19, 2001

From: City Librarian

Subject: **Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy**

Purpose:

To provide the Toronto Public Library Board with information about the proposed revised *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy* (Attachment 1), implementation of the policy and the supporting rate structure (Attachment 2).

Funding Implications and Impact Statement:

Proposed implementation of the policy will allow the room rental service to operate consistently and equitably on a cost recovery basis.

Recommendation:

It is recommended that the Toronto Public Library Board review and approve the revised *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy*, implementation and the supporting rate structure.

Background:

In 1998, a staff report was prepared recommending a harmonized policy and fee structure for room rentals that was brought to the Board in November 1998. The report indicated the Library would make recommendations about room rental pending a review of harmonized policies and fees developed by the City for other community facilities.

At the September 21, 1999 Library Board meeting, the Board approved the recommended *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy* (Attachment 3) and fee structure after staff reported that the City had not yet introduced harmonized policies and rental fees for other community facilities. The revised policy (Attachment 1) further harmonizes past practices.

Implementation of the Library Board's approved policy was deferred pending a review of the impact on groups that regularly use the Library's facilities. As a result of the review it was decided that the groups that will be exempt from fees should be defined more closely to ensure that their mandate is consistent with the Library's strategic direction. Attachment 4 shows the impact of the approved fee structure on a selection of groups that use meeting rooms at the Library on a regular basis.

Comments:

The Public Libraries Act (R.S.O. 1990, Chapter P. 44) of the Province of Ontario makes provision for public libraries to make rules regulating all matters connected with the management of the library and library property *[Sec. 23(4)(b)];* and further, "a board may impose such fees as it considers proper … for the use of parts of a building that are not being used for public library purposes". *[Sec. 23(3)(b)]*.

One-hundred and eleven spaces in meeting rooms, auditoriums and theatres are available for rental purposes in 66 of the Library's 98 locations. Practices have varied widely across the Library system in terms of policy, service administration and rental fees. Current room rates, administrative practices and room availability are outlined in Appendix 5.

Implementing a single *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Policy* for Toronto Public Library is part of the ongoing harmonization of services associated with amalgamation.

Conclusion:

This report will be accompanied by a staff presentation on October 29, 2001 at the Library Board meeting, outlining further details about the implementation of the harmonized *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy*. The attached *Questions and Answers* (Appendix 6) also provides further information.

In summary, more groups will have access to Library facilities and more groups will be able to book outside of Library open hours. However, the introduction of a new fee structure may affect some groups who would pay a higher room rental rate, as the Library provides the service on a cost recovery basis.

The proposed implementation for the policy is 9 - 12 months after Board approval, with a target date of June 2002. Current administrative process will be maintained across the system. As part of implementation, staff will be fully trained on the policy and extensive outreach to affected users will be conducted.

Implementation will be further supported by a systematic communication plan that will emphasize the need for the service to be self-sustaining, so that budgets for other Library services will not be affected.

Staff are currently reviewing the City of Toronto's *Harmonized Municipal Alcohol Policy* and will bring forward a recommendation to the November 2001 Board meeting about its possible incorporation into the *Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy*.

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City Librarian

List of Attachments:

Attachment 1: Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy – October 29, 2001
Attachment 2: Rate Structure
Attachment 3: Auditorium, Meeting Room and Theatre Rental Policy – September 21, 1999
Attachment 4: TPL Room Rentals – Examples of Regular User Groups & Fees
Attachment 5 Current Status
Attachment 6: Room Booking Policy – Questions & Answers – October 29, 2001