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Message from the CEO and Board Chair

2024 was a year of groundwork: reorganizing, restructuring, and rethinking the way we “do Library.” Our renewed focus on and commitment to meeting the needs of the community have led us to enhance the way we plan our programming, manage our collections, and serve our patrons, and the results are starting to show.

We are very proud to share that, thanks to the dedication of our staff, we set new records in 2024. Most notably, approximately 10,000 more children visited the Library than in 2023 to enjoy programming that encourages a love of reading and the development of critical thinking skills.

The kids weren’t alone in enjoying our programming schedule; we also saw a 31.53% increase in adult programming attendance.

With prices rising and the necessities of daily life becoming harder to afford, the Library’s free programs benefit all of us regardless of income, age or ability. We saw an increase in public access computer usage, which shot up 16%. When access to jobs, housing and government services go online, access to a computer and the internet becomes a vital lifeline to those who cannot afford it at home.

With economic uncertainty affecting so many, the Library’s Research team conducted extra outreach to promote the steadfast support we offer the local business community.

We’re doubling down on our success with new, expanded 2025 hours thanks to the groundwork we accomplished in 2024. Thunder Bay Public Library is now open seven days a week and four evenings a week. With new hours and new funds coming in from the huge success of the Friends of the Public Library 50/50 lottery, expect great things from your local Library in 2025!



Richard Togman, CEO



Carol Grieve, Board Chair





Library Board and Staff

Board of Directors

Directors are appointed from the community and City Council and proudly represent our patrons' interests until 2026

Carol Grieve, Board Chair

Jane Todd, Vice Chair (*stepped down October 2024*)

Charmaine McCraw, (*elected Vice Chair October 2024*)

Cory Bagdon

Kelly Fettes

Councillor Trevor Giertuga

Syed Kabir

Sarah Lewis (*resigned April 23, 2024*)

Councillor Michael Zussino

Jordan Hudyma (*appointed September 2024*)

Management Team

Richard Togman, CEO

Ruth Hamlin-Douglas, Head Librarian

Cherri Braye, Director of Resources

Raili Roy, Director of Community Development

Meagan Ross, Associate Director – Development

Chris Gratton, Facilities Manager

Kim Gunn, Human Resources Manager

Cody Angus, Marketing Manager

Mary Akis, Executive Assistant

Laying the Groundwork for Future Improvements

In fall 2024, we completed the reorganization of our staffing structure. While these changes may not be immediately visible to the public, they enhance our focus on customer service and allow us to leverage the incredible expertise of our team more effectively. This important step enabled us to move forward with planning the first of many community-focused improvements: new holiday opening hours and the launch of a 7-day-a-week Library system at the beginning of January 2025.



Congratulations to Tina Maronese on her Retirement

After nearly 30 years of dedicated service, including 18 years as Director of Community Development, Tina Maronese retired from TBPL in June 2024. Her leadership, passion, and commitment to the Library community have made a lasting impact.

Wishing you all the best in this next chapter, Tina!



Budget Overview

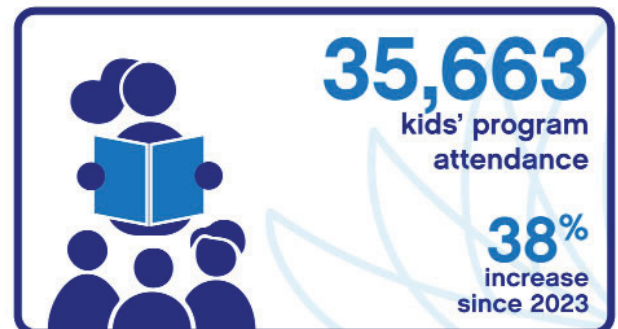
Financial Summary for 2024

Revenue

City of Thunder Bay	\$7,779,600
Province of Ontario	\$262,127
One Time Grants	\$108,963
Fundraising	\$114,694
Other Revenue	\$303,544
Total Revenue	\$8,568,928

Expenditures

Salary & Benefits	\$5,782,804
Library Services & Collections	\$655,998
Buildings & Equipment	\$513,962
Administrative	\$ 437,525
Capital Expenditures	\$510,618
Total Expenditures	\$7,900,907



Supporters

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to the foundations and local businesses listed below, whose support has been instrumental in enhancing our programs and services.

The K.M. Hunter Foundation

The RBC Infrastructure Fund

The Jackman Foundation

The City of Thunder Bay's Clean, Green, and Beautiful Fund

Lowerys

Rose N Crantz Roasting Co.

Thunder Bay Border Cats

Boston Pizza

Mario's Bowl

Franki's Pizza

Gallucci's Pizza

Magnus Theatre



Library Partnerships

Toss it? No Way!

We launched a new partnership and hosted three sessions with the Thunder Bay Repair Café at Waverley Library and Mary JL Black Library. This partnership strongly aligns with our strategic objective of Knowledge Sharing, bringing community members with broken household items together with volunteer “fixers” who show them how to repair their items for free.

Home Run for Literacy

We teamed up with the Thunder Bay Border Cats to offer two Storytime events over the summer, featuring stories read by players and mascot Boomer. These well-attended events helped inspire kids to keep reading and practicing their literacy skills throughout the summer.

Drag Queen Storytime & Crafting with Queens

This all-ages, family-friendly program celebrates creativity and inclusion with enchanting stories and engaging activities that promote diversity, love, and acceptance. A total of 414 people attended the ten Storytime events we hosted in partnership with Storytime with Thunder Bay Drag Queens.

Tackling Racism Together

In cooperation with Magnus Theatre, Thunder Bay Art Gallery, Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra, and Thunder Bay Museum, we worked with consultants to conduct community-based research and develop an anti-racism toolkit. This toolkit provides a foundation to support our organizations’ leadership in allyship development and in training staff to become effective allies. This project, known as the Thunder Bay Collective Initiative on Anti-Racism, Diversity, and Inclusion, was funded by Canadian Heritage / Patrimoine Canadien.



Magnus
Theatre

ag
THUNDER BAY
ART GALLERY

THUNDER BAY
MUSEUM

THUNDER BAY
SYMPHONY
ORCHESTRA



Services

New Website

At the end of April, we unveiled our new website, offering patrons an updated experience inspired by the way they already search, shop, and engage with one another online. With the launch of this new platform, patrons can easily find what they're looking for, and Library staff can share their expertise to help patrons dive deeper into our collections, programs, and services. A Goodreads-style system for rating and reviewing materials allows patrons to engage and make meaningful contributions to one another's Library experiences.

Home Service

Our Home Service team helps make the Library accessible to community members who are deaf, visually impaired, or homebound due to age, illness, or disability. Once a month, the team carefully selects a bag of Library materials for each Home Service patron and arranges for delivery to their home or long-term care facility by a family member, friend, or a volunteer from the Friends of the Library.

InterLibrary Loans

Despite a service interruption caused by the postal strike, our InterLibrary Loans team processed 7,764 items requested by patrons and partner libraries. In addition, we supported a major platform transition for interlibrary loan requests, working alongside our partner libraries to implement a more efficient, streamlined system. These improvements have strengthened partnerships and enhanced the overall request process for both patrons and library staff.

Supporting City Outreach Efforts

Our branches welcomed a total of 268,554 in-person visits in 2024, making the Library an ideal place for the City of Thunder Bay to conduct community engagement activities and distribute materials. We helped distribute the City's free yard waste bags and supported their outreach efforts by collecting printed surveys for the 2024 Budget, Asset Management, the Temporary Shelter Village, and the Northwest Arterial Route. Additionally, we co-hosted engagement events and gathered survey responses for the City Council Composition initiative.





Programming

Play at the Library

Play is the “work” of childhood and is essential to childhood development. Unstructured free play with open-ended toys fosters imagination and creativity, encourages independence, and helps children develop social and emotional skills. Families are often looking for free or low-cost activities for their children. By expanding our popular Play Day programs to three branches, we are giving Thunder Bay families more opportunities to join in. To support this program, we invested in new toys across the system, including climbing and ride-on toys for Waverley Library and a collection of special rotating toys, such as dinosaurs and a dollhouse, that travel among branches.

You Subscribe, We Select

Patrons love the convenience of our registered “grab-and-go” kits and subscription book boxes. No time to stop in and pick out books? Register in advance, and we’ll do it for you ! Library staff use their collection expertise to select materials for children through adults, assembling over 800 kits and circulating over 5,000 books for busy, on-the-go patrons and families.

Kindergarten Readiness

In 2024, TBPL supported kindergarten readiness with a Starting School Expo. Community groups and organizations were invited to share resources for families and children preparing for school. A very special Storytime on a School Bus was also held, giving children the opportunity to familiarize themselves with a school bus in a calm, low-key environment.

“A place to be with kids that is free and so welcoming!”



The Brodie Files & True-Crime Drop-In

Our first foray into sharing stories from our fascinating past, The Brodie Files: True Crime Edition, garnered so much interest that we ran the 4-session program twice, with a total of 52 attendees.

Building on this success, we experimented with a drop-in style true crime program. In October, the TBPL True Crime Files at Mary JL Black Library entertained a capacity crowd of 74 people, who provided overwhelmingly positive feedback.

Indigenous Author Series

Our Indigenous Services department hosted well-attended events featuring four distinct authors as part of our Indigenous Author Series at Brodie Library.

Thanks to the ongoing generosity of the K.M. Hunter Foundation, 291 community members had the opportunity to attend inspiring readings and meet Tanya Talaga, Waubgeshig Rice, Sheila North, and Niigaan Sinclair.



“The Library's commitment to fostering a sense of community shines through these events, providing opportunities for people to connect, learn, and grow together.”





Collections

TBSO Tickets

A new partnership with the Thunder Bay Symphony Orchestra gave 224 Library members the chance to attend symphony performances for free throughout the 2024–2025 season. For most shows, four pairs of tickets were available, while four sets of four tickets were offered for Family Series performances. Tickets were allocated through random draws for each performance, ensuring fair distribution among all interested patrons.

Book Club in a Bag

Book clubs create opportunities for friends and book lovers to catch up and discuss a great read. However, two common challenges seem to come up at every meeting: which book to read next and how to find enough copies for everyone. Our Book Club in a Bag program offers the perfect solution! Each bag contains ten copies of a single title, along with discussion questions, author information, and reviews. In 2024, we added 24 new titles, expanding our collection to 284 bags and loaning them out 645 times.



“Thank you so much for this partnership. It was a wonderful concert which I probably would have missed.”



Special Events

Chat With the Chief

In November, we worked with Thunder Bay Police Services to host a Chat With the Chief event at Brodie Library. Community members were invited to share feedback and ask questions directly to Chief Darcy Fleury about policing in our community.





Thank You for Being a Friend



The Friends of the Thunder Bay Public Library have had an eventful and rewarding year, marked by successful events and initiatives that have significantly bolstered our support for the Library.

In May, we proudly participated in the NOWW LitFest at the Baggage Building Arts Centre. Our two tables attracted numerous visitors eager to learn about our used bookstore at Brodie Library, and the event resulted in many book sales! We extend our gratitude to TBPL for inviting us to be part of this vibrant literary event.

Our monthly book sales (now called Toonie Tote Sales) continue to thrive, offering the community affordable access to a diverse selection of books.

The Holiday Book and Art Sale in November was another highlight, featuring a curated collection of books and artwork that drew enthusiastic crowds. The success of this event underscores the community's dedication to supporting both the Library and the arts.

A milestone achievement this year was the launch of our first-ever online 50/50 lottery! This initiative has been immensely successful, with the inaugural draw awarding over \$41,000 to a lucky winner. The funds raised through this lottery will allow the Friends to support TBPL in unprecedented ways, enhancing Library services and programs for all patrons.

We are deeply grateful to our dedicated volunteers, generous donors, and the entire Thunder Bay community for their unwavering support. Together, we continue to champion the mission of the Thunder Bay Public Library, fostering a culture of learning and enrichment for everyone.

Finally, we would like to thank our executive team for their tireless efforts in raising funds for the Library.



2024 Executive Committee

Fran Duke, President

Christine Paul, Vice President

Joanne Petrisano, Treasurer

Pauline Parker, Secretary & Bingo Convener

Adrian DiGiuseppe, Director

Interested in joining the Friends volunteers to support your Library? Please contact them at friends@tbpl.ca.



Thank You to Our 2024 Donors

We are profoundly grateful to our individual donors, whose heartfelt contributions have been the driving force behind our initiatives. Your unwavering generosity not only fuels our mission but also inspires hope and positive change within our community.

Platinum Level

Gerald Apperly
Jackie & Maurice Black
Bruce & Eda Leaman
John and Janeen Mann
Drew Martin
Janice Redden
Richard Rinn

Gold+ Level

Navraj Brar
George Cherwonick
Carol Daniher
Jean Engholm
Bob & Carol Grieve
Suzanne Hansen
Frances Harding
Elenore Kehlenbeck
Susan Marrier
Jennifer Matson
Dan Newton
Graham and Nancy Post
Kate Veneziale
Women of the Moose FW #1338

Gold Level

Dennis & Marissa Buset
Patrick & Dianne Fenlon
Joan Grassi
Gail Miller
Silvia Pedron

Silver Level

Kirsten Addison
Jonah Anderson
Marie Appleton
Elmer Auld
Joan Baril
Linda Bukovy
Ron Clark
Anna Dekker
Brenda Diebel
Daniel Fontaine
Dian Gracey
Ryan Gracey
Jim and Joan Green
Robert Hughdie
Scott Hurley
Sylvia Kayzer

Ed Knutson
Valentine Kosloski
Margaret Looney
Rosalind Maki
Alan Moon
Margaret Norman
Nancy Oster
Alicyn Papich
Michael Pawlowski
Reijo Peltoniemi
Lexie Penko
Linda Penner
Ron & Nancy Perozzo
Hilda Postenka
Sandy Stafford-Maepea
Jane Todd
Nancy Treloar
Margaret Wanlin
James Wigmore
Mike & Tina Zussino

We have tried to be as accurate as possible in the above list. If there have been any omissions or errors, please accept our apologies. If you have not been appropriately recognized, please contact us at mross@tbpl.ca.

**The
Next
Chapter**

The TBPL Legacy Society



The Next Chapter Legacy Society

These remarkable individuals left legacy gifts to Thunder Bay Public Library over the past year; their enduring generosity ensures the continued enrichment of our community. We invite others to consider joining our Legacy Society, The Next Chapter, to help create a lasting impact for future generations.

Molly Denson - May Lucy Matson - John Wodchyc



Thunder Bay Public Library



www.tbpl.ca