

# ***SOLS Board Summary***

## ***September 2005***

### **Budget Cut**

SOLS and OLS-N received news of a budget cut of \$700,000 from the Ontario Ministry of Culture in June. SOLS' share of this cut is approximately \$462,000, or 14.4% of our operating budget.

At its June meeting, the Board reviewed SOLS' priorities and services and initial decisions of permanent cuts were announced in early July. The cuts included elimination of province-wide research (two positions lost), reduction in consortia/charitable purchasing (one position lost) and reduction in translation (half a position lost). These changes resulted in annualized savings of approximately \$231,000 or 50% of the target. In order to find the remaining 50%, a series of consultation meetings were held throughout southern Ontario over five days in late July and early August. A summary of the results of these consultations are posted on SOLS' website [www.sols.org](http://www.sols.org).

At its September 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Board carefully reviewed the findings of the consultations. Weighing a number of factors, the Board discussed at length the importance of the delivery service and the value of the consulting services. In the end, the Board voted to exclude delivery from the permanent cuts and authorized the CEO to proceed with reductions in the lower priority areas in Library Development. As a result, the following changes were announced:

- The position of Director of Library Development was eliminated and Bill Mitchell's last day with SOLS was September 23, 2005. Bill's role included managing the Library Development Division and acting as a library consultant with a specialty in space planning and facilities.
- The position of Trustee Development Manager was eliminated and Randee Loucks' last day with SOLS was September 30, 2005. Randee acted as a specialist consultant on governance issues and trustee development and advised SOLS' generalist consultants on board-related matters.

These changes will result in a reorganization at SOLS with Barbara Franchetto assuming the position of Director of Services and Daryl Novak taking over as Director of Operations. The CEO will announce details of the reorganization, including how specialized consulting services are affected, later. The Board will also be reviewing its Ends Priorities later this year, particularly in regard to Priority 2 where most of the losses were incurred.

In addition, the Board discussed ways of further reducing its own expenses. It voted to reduce the frequency of Board meetings (now quarterly) and, effective next year, it will meet only three times per year. The Board will also review its size and composition with a goal to downsizing. This review is scheduled for later this year. As interim steps, the Board has voted to leave two existing Trustee Council positions vacant and to ask the Minister to suspend further ministerial nominations.

With these changes, we estimate that we have achieved the annualized savings of \$462,000. There remains, however, a shortfall within the current fiscal year and it is this shortfall that has been driving the need for temporary in-year cuts such as the ten day shutdown of all operations. Following progress made in discussions with the Ministry of Culture, the Board decided to continue the Interlibrary Loan delivery service uninterrupted this fall. Also in these discussions, it was determined that a third party financial review would be undertaken. This review will determine strategies to meet SOLS' 05/06 transition costs.

### **Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson Acclaimed**

The annual elections for the positions of Chairperson and Vice-Chairperson were scheduled for this meeting. Susannah Ketchum was returned as Chairperson for a third year. Jim Neill was acclaimed Vice-Chairperson. Jim was elected to SOLS' Board from Trustee Council 6 in 2002. He is Chair of the Kingston Frontenac Public Library board and has been an active member of the board for ten years. Jim was also a member of Kingston City Council for six years. He is a high school drama teacher and a Teacher-Librarian with Upper Canada School board.

### **Operations Planning Quarterly Update**

An update on SOLS' services is available at [www.sols.org](http://www.sols.org).

### **Next Board Meeting**

The next meeting of SOLS' Board is scheduled for Saturday December 3, 2005 from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. at SOLS' office in Toronto.