

On March 20, 2024 the Fort Frances Public Library Technology Centre distributed a media release informing the community of the reduction in requested funding from the Town for the Library's 2024 operating budget.

In this release it stated that Town administration had proposed to Council to "cut Library budget funding by 5%". The Library wishes to clarify this statement, as it inadvertently implied that the "cut" to Library funding was brought upon by administration. It is an important detail to note that the decision to "cut" Library funding was directed by Town Council to administration in an attempt to find savings with Town spending across the board, including funding for the Library.

It is also important to note that the "cut", as stated in the March 20 media release, is related to the amount of funding the Library requested for the 2024 operating budget. While the amount of funding requested was reduced it was still a funding increase of 1.5% from the 2023 operating budget. The use of the phrase "budget cut" was not the correct phrase to have used in the media release.

The Library recognizes the Town is in a very difficult financial position, and also recognizes that Council has to make very difficult decisions regarding where to allocate funding, especially when a substantial amount of annual Town funding has to go towards uncontrollable costs. Unfortunately, the Library is in a similar financial position since a substantial amount of the annual Library budget is spent on uncontrollable costs.

The Library is limited in the ability to generate revenue that does not create financial barriers to access library services. To maintain hours and services the Fort Frances Public Library Technology Centre is almost completely reliant on funding from the Town of Fort Frances. Any reduction in funding to the Library less than what is requested has a negative impact on Library operations. For the 2024 budget, this meant that the Library had to make the difficult decision to reduce hours of operation.

The Library wishes to apologize for any and all concern and confusion the March 20 media release caused.