

OCLA Chair's Report
November 2021

We have had only two membership changes to report on since our last meeting as a group in the Spring. In June, Sarah Huie joined the Waterloo Law Association, moving from her previous position at the Perth Law Association. In October, we bid a very happy retirement to Denise Lortie at the Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry Law Association in Cornwall.

Since our last AGM, we've had quite a tumultuous ride. It was in late 2020 that we received the devastating news that the LIRN budget was to be cut by 10% in 2021. This cut impacted all libraries in the province, libraries which were already underfunded. I say most strenuously and with tremendous pride that OCLA members have done an absolutely fantastic job facing those cuts head on. Throughout the last year, we've tightened our belts, put on our thinking caps, and found a way to make it work. We have not been funded optimally, but we've carried on in a way that provided for service to our communities, collections in our libraries, and continued employment for our members. Bravo to every single one of you.

With this experience so close in the rearview mirror, it is with cautious optimism that I celebrate the passing of the 2022 LSO budget. While there may be challenges ahead in the details of where we go from here, I am excited to see what progress we can make, how we can work together in new ways, and of course, how the library service available to the Ontario legal community can improve. The role as library staff in the access to justice ecosystem is an important one, as we all know, and improved funding and a mandate for LIRN to press forward with a system for the post-COVID 21st century will be all the better for OCLA's involvement.

As always, I'd like to extend thanks to our OCLA executive members: Stacey Zip, Michelle Gerrits, Christiane Wyskiel, and Pia Williams. It is a delight and my pleasure to work with you all.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Walker