

# DEVELOPING REGIONAL BOARD NETWORKS

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# Agenda

- Libraries of Niagara Region
- Region Wide Board Orientation
  - Why did we decide to do this?
  - How did we plan and prepare?
  - Who helped make it happen?
  - How much did it cost?
  - Where and when?
  - What sessions did we offer?
  - What did we learn?
- Moving Forward



# Libraries of Niagara Region

- 12 Public Library Systems
- Ranging in Size
- Regular Meetings of:
  - ▣ CEOs
  - ▣ Children's Services Staff
  - ▣ Adult/Info Services Staff
  - ▣ Evergreen ILS
- No formal consortium or agreement

Fort Erie  
Grimsby  
LINCOLN NOTL  
Niagara Falls  
Pelham WELLAND  
Port Colborne  
St. Catharines  
Thorold Wainfleet  
West Lincoln

# Why?



- Inspired by similar efforts in other regions
- Shared Interests
- Common Timeline
- Economies of Scale
- Ease of Travel
- Board to Board Learning
- Networking

# It's all in the planning...

- Developed a working group
- Asked each library to commit in advance
- Sought assistance from the experts



# Challenges...

- Still a need to provide distinct orientation for each Board
- Delays in naming of new boards



# Dollars and Sense

- Opted to charge a flat rate to each Library Board, regardless of number of members attending.
- Fort Erie Public Library managed the financials and billed each library a flat rate.
- Costs included lunch, basic supplies, mileage and thank you gifts for speakers

# Program Sessions

## Niagara Public Libraries OnBoard

LINCOLN PUBLIC LIBRARY, FLEMING CENTRE, BEAMSVILLE  
SATURDAY, APRIL 11, 2015

**SESSIONS AT A GLANCE:**

- Opening Plenary
- Cut to the Chase: Library Governance at a Glance
- Extreme Board Makeover
- Public Library Strategic Planning in the Niagara Context
- The Effective Governance Partnership : The Board/CEO Relationship
- Closing Plenary and Keynote Address


**INSIDE:**

|                 |     |
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A symposium for library board members serving throughout Niagara Region and hosted by the Lincoln Public Library Board. Geared to the interests of all board members, new and experienced, the program features topics and speakers to enlighten and inspire you in your library governance and community leadership role.

**Saturday, April 11, 2015**  
**8:30 AM – 1:30 PM**

**Fleming Centre**  
5020 Serena Drive  
Beamsville, ON



**Wainfleet** PORT COLBORNE  
West Lincoln **NOTL**  
LINCOLN Grimsby  
St. Catharines  
Niagara Falls PELHAM  
Fort Erie Thorold **Welland**



# Program Sessions

- Opening Plenary:

Welcome and Networking.

- Choice of two breakout sessions:

- *Cut to the Chase: Library Governance At-a-Glance* with guests Shelagh Patterson, Executive Director, OLA, Randee Loucks, consultant and Stephen Abram, Executive Director, FOPL.

# Program Sessions

- *Extreme Board Makeover* with Andrew Porteus, Chair & Terry Flynn, Council Rep, NOTL Public Library.
- *Public Library Strategic Planning in the Niagara Context* – Living in Niagara report from Niagara Connects.
- *The Effective Governance Partnership: The Board/CEO Relationship* – Anne-Marie Madziak, SOLS consultant.

# Program Sessions

- Closing Plenary:

*Library Leadership as a Public Board Member –*  
Keynote Address by Jane Hilton, OLA President.  
Response Panel.



# Venue

- Venue – conveniently located with appropriate meeting rooms.
- New branch of the Lincoln Public Library in Beamsville fit the bill.
- Joint use facility with meeting space.



# Logistics

- Lincoln CEO handled logistics – catering, technology, room set-ups.
- Some CEOs convened the sessions.
- Other CEOs provided support on event day.



# Feedback As Told to CEOs

*“... feedback I got was unanimously positive from all who attended with the hope that this will be an annual event.”*

Jennifer R. Parry, Port Colborne

*“... members attending felt the speakers provided a good introduction for new board members.”*

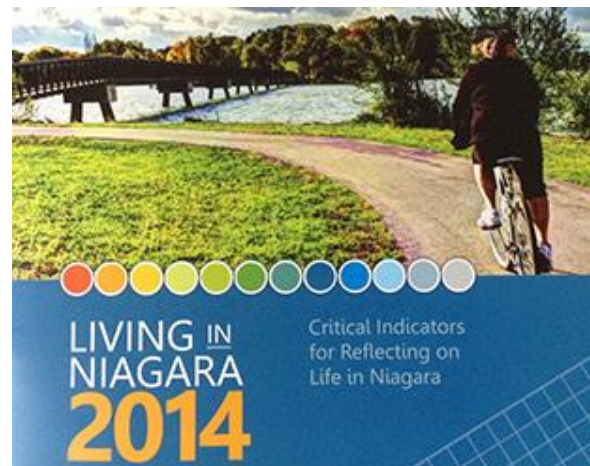
Patti Bronson, Thorold

*“ I spoke to each attendee and feedback was overwhelmingly positive. They liked the program that included a good mix of library governance and community topics that would be of interest to libraries.”*

Kirk Weaver, Pelham

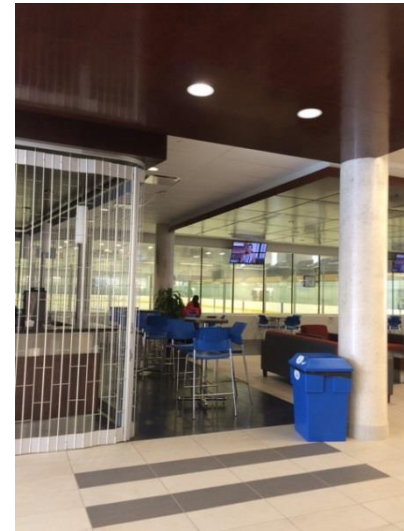
# Positive Board Feedback

- Connecting and networking with other boards
- Regional cooperation
- Supporting organizations (OLBA, SOLS)
- Identification of dysfunctional board dynamics
- Introduction to regional planning & issues



# Negative Board Feedback

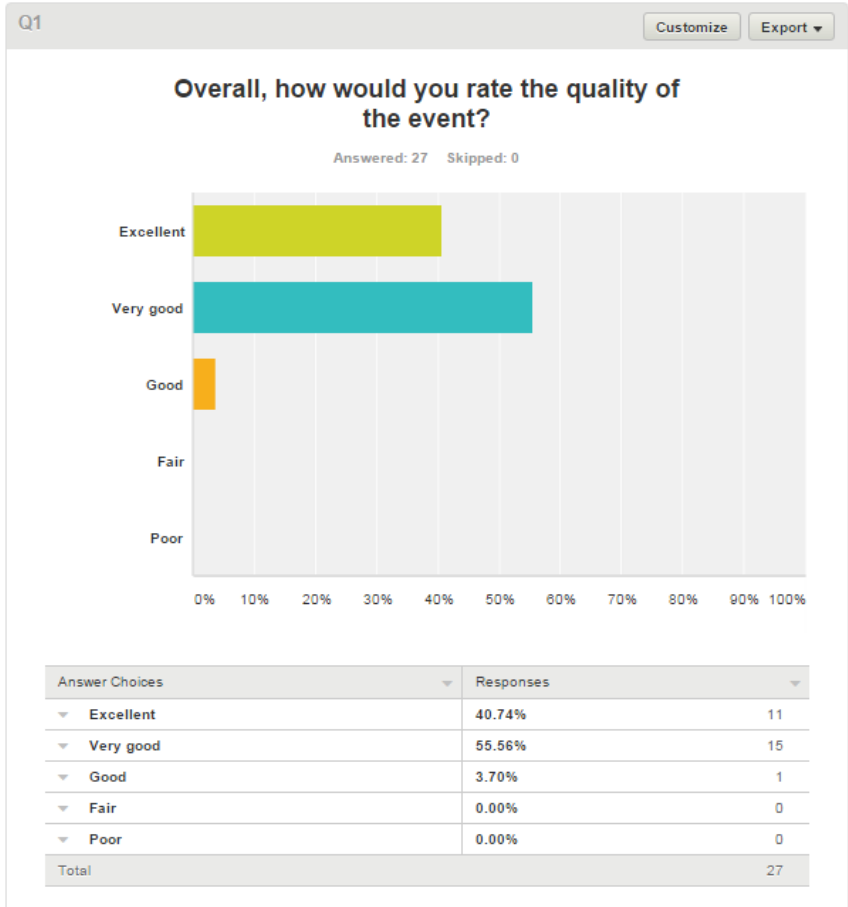
- ❑ Open concept venue not good for plenary
- ❑ Better moderation of panel discussion needed
- ❑ Offer more modules at different times
- ❑ Solicit feedback much closer to the event



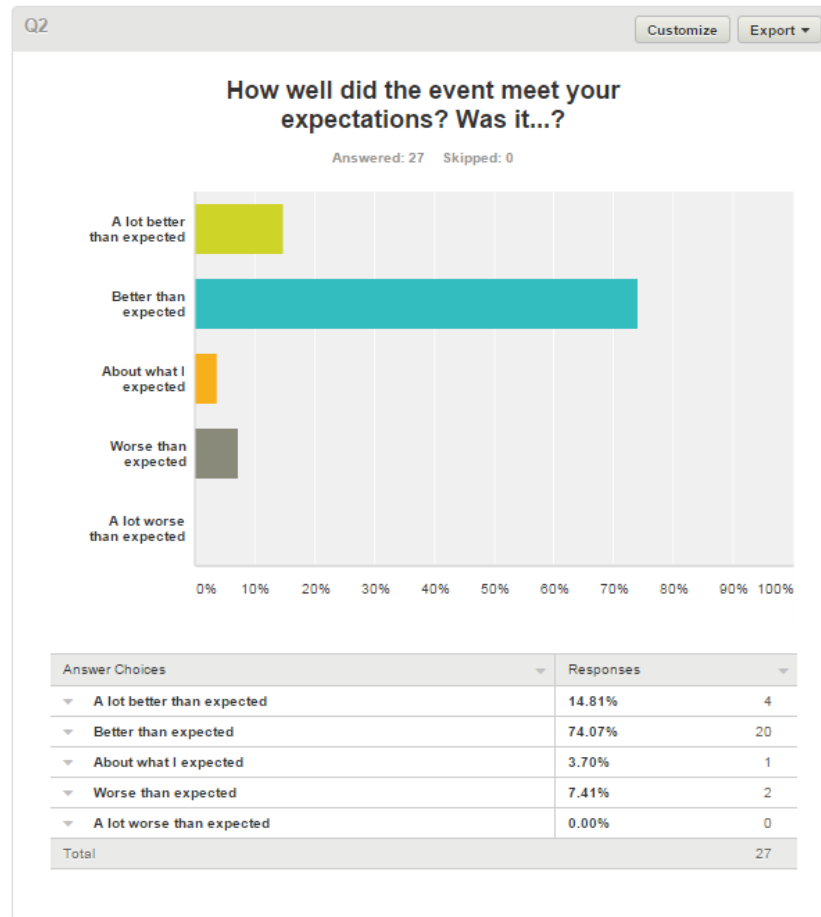


# Board Feedback Survey

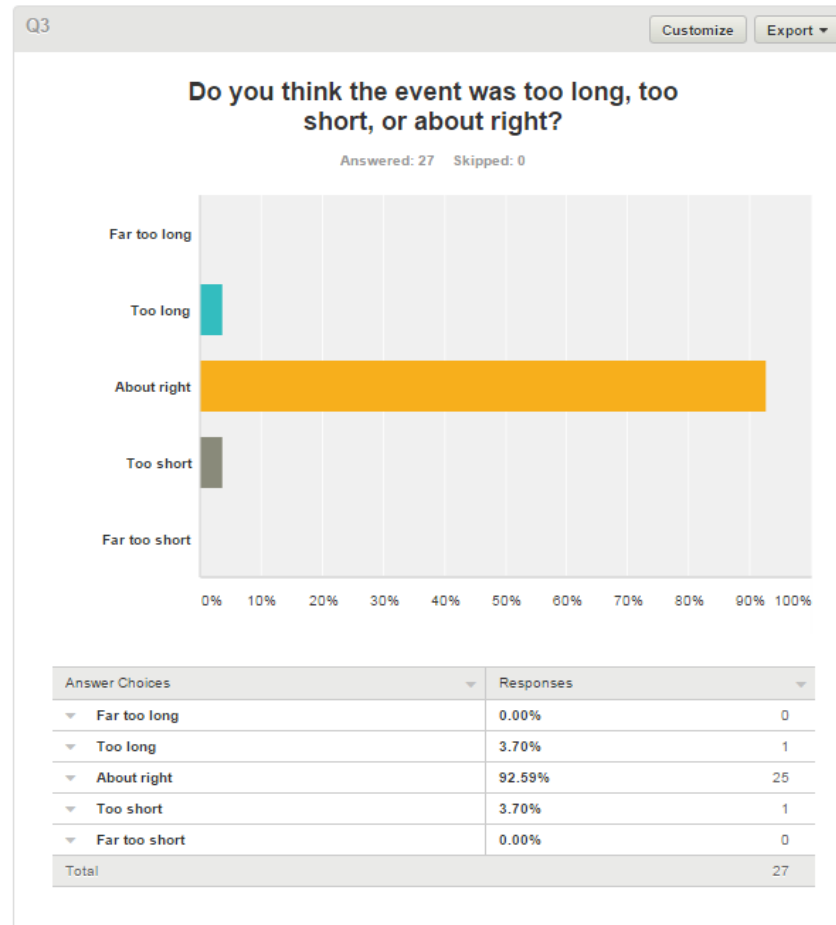
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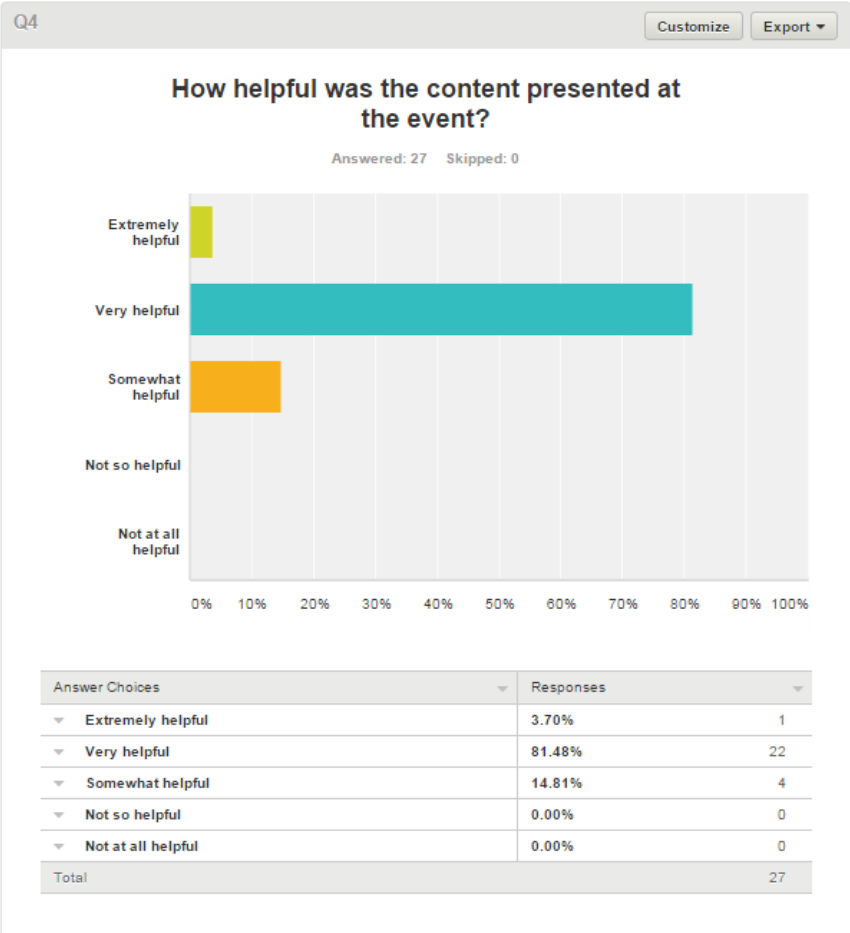
# Board Feedback Survey



# Board Feedback Survey



# Board Feedback Survey



# Board Feedback Survey

Q5 Export ▾

**What was the single most valuable thing you learned at the event?**

Answered: 19 Skipped: 8

● Responses (19) Text Analysis My Categories

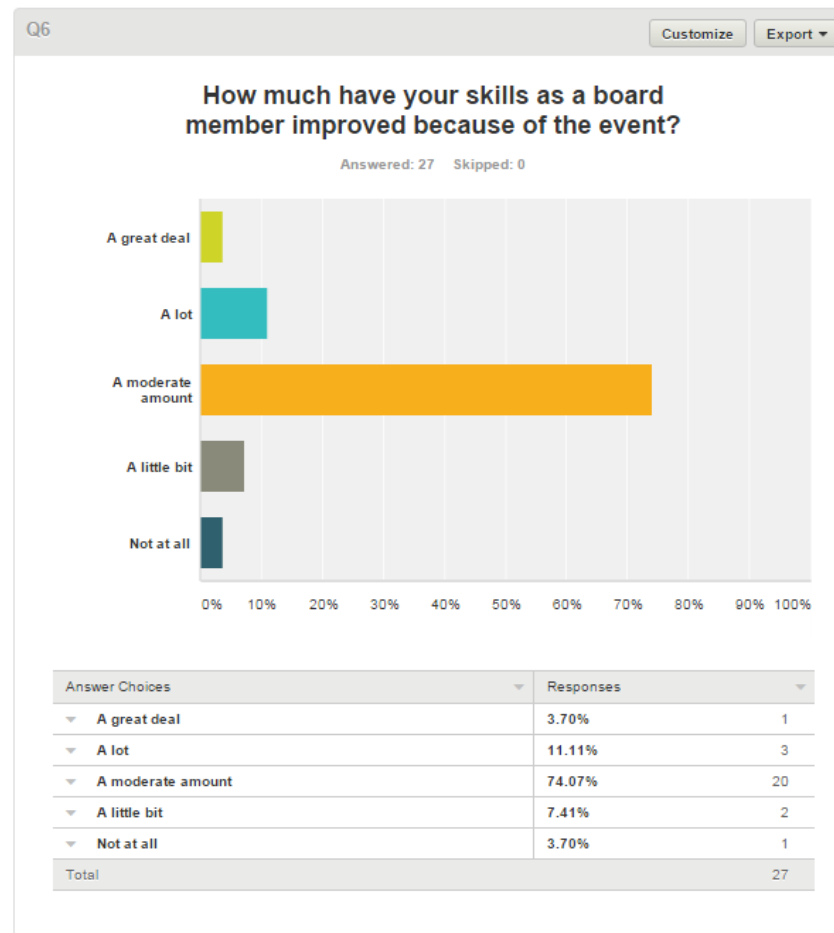
**PRO FEATURE**  
Use text analysis to search and categorize responses; see frequently-used words and phrases. To use Text Analysis, upgrade to a GOLD or PLATINUM plan.  
[Upgrade](#) [Learn more »](#)

Categorize as... ▾ Filter by Category ▾  🔍 ?

Showing 19 responses

- What a dysfunctional Board might look like and face.  
1/22/2016 4:03 PM [View respondent's answers](#)
- OLA support available  
1/22/2016 3:18 PM [View respondent's answers](#)
- The scope of library activities  
1/22/2016 1:32 PM [View respondent's answers](#)
- Many boards face similar issues.  
1/22/2016 1:31 PM [View respondent's answers](#)
- Information on the training modules through SOLs and the OLBA  
1/22/2016 1:19 PM [View respondent's answers](#)
- The Board Makeover session was informative - interesting to see the dynamics of that particular situation  
1/22/2016 1:15 PM [View respondent's answers](#)
- The Regional Planning document  
1/22/2016 11:51 AM [View respondent's answers](#)

# Board Feedback Survey



# Board Feedback Survey

The screenshot displays a survey results page for the question "How could future events be improved?". The interface includes a title bar with "Q7" and an "Export" button. Below the question, it shows "Answered: 15" and "Skipped: 12". There are three tabs: "Responses (15)", "Text Analysis", and "My Categories". A yellow "PRO FEATURE" banner is present, with an "Upgrade" button and a "Learn more »" link. Below the banner, there are controls for "Categorize as...", "Filter by Category", and a "Search responses" input field. The main content area shows "Showing 15 responses" and a list of five response entries, each with the text of the response, a timestamp, and a "View respondent's answers" link.

Q7 Export ▾

## How could future events be improved?

Answered: 15 Skipped: 12

● Responses (15) Text Analysis My Categories

**PRO FEATURE** ✕

Use text analysis to search and categorize responses; see frequently-used words and phrases. To use Text Analysis, upgrade to a GOLD or PLATINUM plan.

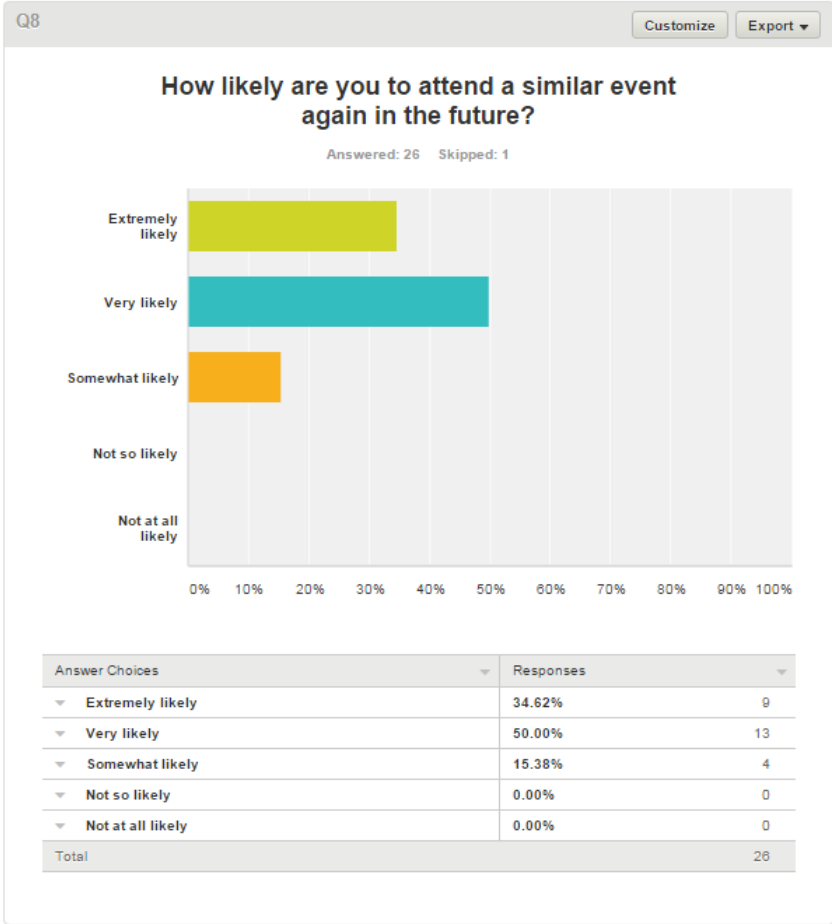
[Upgrade](#) [Learn more »](#)

Categorize as... ▾ Filter by Category ▾ Search responses

Showing 15 responses

|   |                   |   |
|---|-------------------|---|
| I realize the wrap-up get-together and summary is important but this might use some deeper thought and planning.  | 1/22/2016 4:03 PM | <a href="#">View respondent's answers</a> |
| Pretty good as is   | 1/22/2016 1:32 PM | <a href="#">View respondent's answers</a> |
| I think it will be difficult to beat this one.  | 1/22/2016 1:31 PM | <a href="#">View respondent's answers</a> |
| It would be helpful to have them bi-annually or annually  | 1/22/2016 1:19 PM | <a href="#">View respondent's answers</a> |
| The plenary session. The moderator droned on providing too much re her bona fides, and then didn't seem to have a focus. I left part way through this session - it was really weak after the quality of the earlier sessions. | 1/22/2016 1:15 PM | <a href="#">View respondent's answers</a> |
| recommend holding this event annually.....April was a good month as weather was not an obstacle to attendance   | 1/13/2016 2:29 PM | <a href="#">View respondent's answers</a> |

# Board Feedback Survey





# What We Learned



- Schedule during good weather months
- Offer sessions multiple times so all can attend
- Keep to a part day session (i.e. not full day)
- Organizing committee & event coordinator critical
- Obtain feedback at event or immediately after
- Continue to invite staff participation
- Re-think closing plenary & discussion panel

# Moving Forward

- Make it an annual event
- Future sessions on:
  - Legislation
  - Marketing
  - CEO Evaluation
  - Board Communication
- Collaborate on other region-wide library initiatives

# Thanks

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- Monika Seymour – Niagara Falls Public Library
- Maria Brigantino and Craig Shufelt – Fort Erie Public Library
- Kirk Weaver – Pelham Public Library
- Janet Booth – Welland Public Library
- Margaret Andrewes – Building Strong Boards



# Contact Information

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