



Executive Director's Report to Directors Association – February 2014

- 1) MHLS Board of Trustees met on Saturday, January 18. Actions included:
 - a) Welcomed and introduced new trustees: John Dax (Columbia County), Michele Ment (Putnam County), and David Rolfe (Ulster County)
 - b) Approved *Non-Competition and Conflict of Interest Policy* and *Staff Development Policy*
 - c) Adopted Priority Themes based on topics being reported in the annual survey by Library Directors and Board Presidents multiple times.
 - i) Priority areas for MHLS Staff are:
 - (1) Provide software/online applications to support meeting/training participation by remote users
 - (2) Reduce the fees paid by member libraries
 - (3) Enhance advocacy efforts to promote libraries to local/State elected and appointed officials
 - ii) Priority areas for the MHLS Board are:
 - (1) Improve MHLS Board outreach
 - (2) Recognize MHLS staff for the outstanding services being delivered
 - d) Approved *Member Library Mileage Reimbursement Equalization Grant*
 - e) Approved 2014 MHLS Board Meeting Schedule
 - (1) Saturday, March 22, 10:00 a.m., Board Meeting followed by New Board Member Orientation & Luncheon @ MHLS Auditorium
 - (2) Wednesday, May 7, 3:30-5:00 p.m., Board Meeting followed by 5-6 p.m. Regional Meet & Greet @ Cairo Public Library
 - f) Approved MHLS General Funds for Encore
 - g) Approved Terms of Two-Year Contract Between MHLS and CSEA Local 702 (Collective Bargaining Staff)
 - h) Approved Extending Salary Increases (2.5% in 2014 & 2% in 2015) in MHLS/CSEA Contract to MHLS Staff Not in Collective Bargaining Unit
- 2) Signed Agreement with Town of Union Vale
 - a) Agreement has been signed between the Town of Union Vale and MHLS for Town residents to receive library services from the Beekman Library, the LaGrange Association Library, the Millbrook Free Library, and the Dover Plains Library. The Agreement includes a \$30,000 payment from the Town to be divided among neighboring libraries based on patron use.
- 3) Review on the Construction Grant Process
 - a) The Incentives Committee of the MHLS Board will be reviewing how the State Aid for Public Library Construction program is conducted. The review will include a brief survey of Library Directors regarding their perceptions and experiences with the program. Other areas to be reviewed include: (1) the application submission process, (2) the Incentives Committee review process, and (3) funding priorities. The Incentives Committee is scheduled to meet on Monday, February 24, 10 AM, MHLS.
- 4) Putnam County Library Association Annual Dinner Meeting
 - a) I had the opportunity to participate in the Annual Dinner Meeting and discuss the future of public libraries. The following page was a handout.



Recommendations for Libraries

Futurist Thomas Frey - Google's Top Rated Futurist Speaker & Executive Director of the DaVinci Institute

Libraries are in a unique position. Since most people have fond memories of their times growing up in libraries, and there are no real “library hater” organizations, most libraries have the luxury of time to reinvent themselves.

The role of a library within a community is changing. The way people interact with the library and the services it offers is also changing. For this reason we have put together a series of recommendations that will allow libraries to arrive at their own best solutions.

- 1) **Evaluate the library experience.** Begin the process of testing patron’s opinions, ideas, thoughts, and figure out how to get at the heart of the things that matter most in your community. Survey both the community at large and the people who walk through the library doors.
- 2) **Embrace new information technologies.** New tech products are being introduced on a daily basis and the vast majority of people are totally lost when it comes to deciding on what to use and what to stay away from. Since no organization has stepped up to take the lead in helping the general public understand the new tech, it becomes a perfect opportunity for libraries. Libraries need to become a resource for as well as the experts in each of the new technologies.
 - A. Create a technology advisory board and stay in close communication with them.
 - B. Recruit tech savvy members of the community to hold monthly discussion panels where the community at large is invited to join in the discussions.
 - C. Develop a guest lecture series on the new technologies.
- 3) **Preserve the memories of your own communities.** While most libraries have become the document archive of their community, the memories of a community span much more than just documents. What did it sound like to drive down Main Street in 1950? What did it smell like to walk into Joe’s Bakery in the early mornings of 1965? Who are the people in these community photos and why were they important? Memories come in many shapes and forms. Don’t let yours disappear.
- 4) **Experiment with creative spaces so the future role of the library can define itself.** Since the role of the library 20 years from now is still a mystery, we recommend that libraries put together creative spaces so staff members, library users, and the community at large can experiment and determine what ideas are drawing attention and getting traction. Some possible uses for these creative spaces include:* Band practice rooms * Podcasting stations * Blogger stations * Art studios * Recording studios * Video studios * Imagination rooms * Theater-drama practice rooms

We have come a long ways from the time of da Vinci and the time when books were chained to lecterns. But we’ve only scratched the surface of many more changes to come. Writing the definitive history of modern libraries is a work in progress. Our best advice is to enjoy the journey and relish in the wonderment of what tomorrow may bring.