

1. **Advocacy with State Representatives = modest success**

State aid will increase \$2.615 million from \$79 million to \$81.615 in 2012-2013, which is just over a 3% increase. So thank you, your staff, boards, and friends for their advocacy! An additional \$1.3 million has been approved for libraries impacted by the MTA payroll tax. Mid-Hudson would have fallen below the MTA payroll tax threshold that began April 1, so we would have been clear of the tax. But Poughkeepsie, and possibly Mahopac, could still have been on the hook for the tax. So this is great news as well!

2. **MHLS Finance Committee to Review Revised 2012 Budget**

The Finance Committee met on Friday, April 27, to review a draft of a revised 2012 operating budget with projections for 2013 and 2014. Although we haven't seen the actual numbers on the aid for 2012, we budgeted less state revenue than we received in 2011 on the chance that we would see less support in 2012, not more. Now however, we're estimating an increase in revenue of about \$97,000, a difference of 4.3% from what we budgeted. The committee reviewed possible ways to revise the budget and is considering a \$36,000 one-time reduction in the members fee in 2012, investing \$20,000 in ebook purchases, and establishing \$90,000 Assessment Reserve Fund. **The revisions are posted** for the Directors Association meeting of May 4.

3. **One-Time Members Fee Adjustment in 2012 and/or Reserve Fund for 2013?**

The System Funding Task Force meets on May 15, 2012, to review the Finance Committee's proposed revision of Mid-Hudson's 2012 budget. Some combination of a one-time reduction in the members fee in 2012, additional ebook purchases and/or the establishment of a reserve fund that could be used to offset future reductions in state aid, improvements in Sierra or even System services will be among the ideas discussed.

4. **Revised Delivery Agreement Signed**

We signed a revised delivery agreement with Hudson River Transport on April 12 as planned. The new agreement goes into effect July 1 and will save an estimated \$20,000 this year by eliminating the current fuel surcharge schedule. Had we not revised the agreement, we were projecting delivery costs to exceed \$356,000 by the end of the year. Now, costs are expected to be around \$336,000, up slightly from what we budgeted for the year.

5. **Access to Dutchess County Fuel Expected**

We also signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Hudson River Transport on April 12 that will pull the cost of fuel out of the revised agreement when we reach an agreement with Dutchess County for tax-free fuel. Marc Molinaro, Dutchess County Executive, spoke at the Annual Dutchess County Public Library Trustees Dinner on April 18 and confirmed the County's intention to provide Mid-Hudson access to County fuel. He estimated that this would save Mid-Hudson, at present, 34-cents per gallon. So this is great news and we're hoping to have an agreement in place with the County by July 1.

6. **Some Reallocation of Member Library Deliveries**

The new agreement also calls for some reallocation of member library deliveries beginning July 1. The reallocations are based on delivery volume and geography and will increase deliveries to twelve libraries, most of which are high volume libraries, and reduce deliveries at six low volume libraries. The six member libraries, most of which receive fewer than 10 boxes of material a week, will continue to receive three stops a week. The reallocations were reviewed by an ad hoc committee of directors that met in November 2011 and Tom Finnigan has already begun contacting the libraries affected by the changes.

7. **Four Holidays Added to No-Delivery Schedule for a Total of 10 Holidays**

Under the new contract and beginning July 1, there will be no deliveries on 10 holidays--Martin Luther King Day, President's Day, Veteran's Day and the day after Thanksgiving **have been added** to the existing no-delivery days of New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Fourth of July, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas Day.

8. **Direct Access Plan Revised**

The ad hoc directors committee on the Direct Access Plan met on April 13 to revise the plan. DLD did not approve the use of the verb "to refuse" in the final section of the plan that spells out possible action taken when serious inequities and hardships are met. DLD suggests that we use the verb "to restrict," which is the word used in the Commissioner's Regulations. **A copy of the revised plan has been posted** for the Directors Association May meeting. The revisions begin on page 4. Revised text is in red and underlined, and text being removed is crossed out. The revised plan will need to be approved by both the Directors Association and the Mid-Hudson Board.

9. **Member Library Representatives to Change with State Redistricting**

Redistricting plans are still in limbo with some proposed districts being challenged in the courts. But if the redistricting of the state legislature goes forward as proposed, a major focus of our advocacy in the fall will be introducing ourselves to a new set of legislators. The changes are potentially pretty dramatic. The Cities of Poughkeepsie and Beacon would fall into the 104th Assembly District represented by Frank Skartados. The 103rd Assembly District, with newly elected Didi Barret, would keep a toehold in Dutchess County but would otherwise flip west over the river and sweep up 14 libraries in Ulster County. There would be libraries represented by Assembly Members Joel Miller and Didi Barrett but other libraries would fall into different Assembly Districts. Same is true for Senate Districts. Libraries in Columbia would fall into the 43rd Senate District, represented by Senator Roy McDonald. All of Greene and much of Ulster would fall into the 46th Senate District, represented by Senator Neil Breslin. Letters and visits may lie ahead and county associations may need to engage a new set of legislators!

10. **Member Library Data Report Sometime in May, Official Data Available this Fall**

I'll be compiling a data report with member library statistics as planned and I'll send out a draft probably sometime mid-May. Unfortunately, the official state data from 2011 annual reports won't be available until the fall, but I don't expect any significant differences between the data available then and now. But I will use the official data for the 2010 data report.