Consultant Reports
Directors Association Meeting – March 2012

Merribeth Advocate, Outreach & Education Coordinator

1. **Summer Reading Program Mini-Grants**: DLD has notified us that there will be funds for SRP mini-grants this year. This is a competitive grant and not all applications will be able to be funded. All projects must focus on increasing public library / school library collaborations, and partnerships with schools that result in increased SRP participation.

2. **NYS Partners**: The following organizations are partnering with the NYS Summer Reading Program to bring resources to public libraries and families:
   a. Together Book Club – a book club for kids and parents, organized by the New York Council for the Humanities http://tgrbookclub.wordpress.com/what/
   b. 4-H Youth Development - the largest out of school youth organization in the United States. Each county office has an approach that is designed to meet the needs of the local community.
      i. Columbia: http://www.ccecolumbiagreene.org/
      ii. Dutchess: http://www.ccedutchess.org/
      iii. Greene: http://www.ccecolumbiagreene.org/
      iv. Putnam: http://counties.cce.cornell.edu/putnam/
      v. Ulster: http://www.cceulster.org/

3. **OverDrive Help**: The brand-new 'Help' interface launched on 2/14/12 and is accessed by clicking the 'Help' button in the top tool bar of the MHLS Digital Download s webpage at http://mhls.lib.overdrive.com. OverDrive Help contains everything users need to know to enjoy eBooks and audiobooks from our digital collection including great 'getting started' help, customized help for the users computer or device, a listing of compatible devices, and answers to FAQs.

4. **Digital Literacy Standards**: The updated Digital Literacy Standards for New Yorkers are attached to the end of this packet. Being digitally literate allows people to interact using the tools and technologies that are increasingly being used at home, in school and in business. There will be training coming from this initiative for library staff to be able to help people new to using computers.

5. **Hudson Book Festival**: The fourth annual Hudson Children's Book Festival will be held on May 5th from 10 am to 4 pm. There will be over 85 children's and young adult authors and illustrators.

Rebekkah Smith Aldrich, Coordinator for Library Growth & Sustainability

1. **Legislative Update:**
   - **Advocacy Season in NY:** Updated 2012 Legislative Priorities and Talking Points are included in your DA packet to help you get ready for Library Advocacy Day, **March 6th in Albany**
   - **Tax Cap:**
      i. **Special District Libraries** should consider their options to comply with the paperwork from OSC. You will need to either live with using the previous year's data and passing the override resolution to cover yourself or change your vote date to November or later through an

amendment to your legislation in order to have access to the current data in order to know your exact "2%" amount.

ii. **Talking about the Tax Cap:** Area school districts have been pushing information to communities to educate them about the tax cap and how it "really" works in preparation for their budget votes. I've gathered a number of their handouts and presentations and used them as the basis of a handout I've created that I plan to run by the Marketing Advisory Committee this month for member libraries to use when explaining how "2%" is not really "2%."

- **Open Meeting Law Amendment:** Effective February 2, 2012: Disclosure of Records Scheduled for Discussion at Open Meetings. Hopefully either the posting to the DA list or the *Bulletin* headline regarding the new amendment to the Open Meeting Law about publicly sharing documents to be discussed during board meetings caught your attention. If not, the information is attached to the DA packet.
- **National Library Legislative Day:** April 23 & 24 in Washington DC. The NLLD Coordinator for NY is Robert Hubsher, 845.343.1132 ext. 242, rhubsher@rcls.org

2. **Oath of Office Form**: The sample Oath of Office form on the MHLS web site has been updated to include a spot to fill in the term of office for each trustee. The form is customizable to add in spaces for each trustee on your board if you decide to do this annually at a board meeting rather than have each trustee file for themselves. [http://midhudson.org/trustee/organization/oath.doc]

3. **414 Libraries:**
- Libraries going for a 414 this year should commit to the decision **no later than April** to provide for the ideal amount of time to prepare for the vote. A suggested timeline is available in the *Inch by Inch, Row by Row* publication from MHLS found on the front of the *Trustee Resources* section of midhudson.org.
- I would encourage that your board have a conversation about allowing for the **public election of trustees**. This can strengthen your bid for 414 funding. I am happy to come and talk to your board about this should they have any questions about the 414 process or the trustee election option.
- If you are planning to go for a 414 vote this year **please let me know** as soon as you can. Thanks!

4. **Ethics Statement:** The Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations (ALTAFF) has adopted a new "Public Library Trustee Ethics Statement." I would encourage your library board to adopt either this ethics statement or devise a similar document. The new statement is attached to the DA packet.

5. **2012-2013 Construction Grant Program:**
- Later in March your library will receive the Construction Needs Update Memo. All libraries should fill this out and submit it. ***This survey is required for all libraries considering applying for the next round of Construction Grants.***
- **If you are considering an application for the next round, please start thinking/planning now:**
  i. Work on a **facility plan**, a sample outline for a plan is available by emailing me. You will need to identify your facility needs in a prioritized fashion. The MHLS Board requires this.
  ii. If you are thinking of an **energy conservation related project** you must at least have a NYSERDA energy audit done of your building.

6. **LSTA Grants**
- Our current grant, **Building Your Base Online** will wrap up over the next two months. The **"10 Things" Program** is going well. A big learning through the program is that nothing beats hands-on time with electronic resources and products for staff. This was particularly driven home during our third week when we focused on OverDrive. A large number of participants admitted they had never actually downloaded an audio or eBook and once they had they felt significantly more comfortable with their role in helping patrons do the same.

i. **Coming Soon: Train-the-Trainer workshops for member library staff who help patrons with OverDrive!**

- **The next LSTA grant** (FY2012-2013) will continue to build on the Building Your Base theme towards the goal of helping your library achieve sustainable funding. It will incorporate suggestions from the Marketing Advisory Committee, Continuing Education & Professional Development Committee as well as address input received during the Plan of Service development last year to create **a program for directors** to hone leadership and advocacy skills. The new project will be called, ***Building Your Base: From the Inside Out***, and will be designed to enhance director skills in **attribute areas identified in the research-based report from OCLC, *From Awareness to Funding*** with the overarching goal to enhance directors' abilities to **lead from within their organizations.** The main idea is modeled along the lines of the Advocacy Boot Camp workshops – that we have to first rally staff, trustees, Friends and then the community towards broader support for the library. Nationally recognized library consultant Sandra Nelson will be working on the project with MHLS staff.

7. **Essential Documents Inventory:** I decided to take pity on you and hold off on this until after Annual Reports were due so watch for your inventory soon!

8. **Next WOMM Topic:** As we've moved to a quarterly Word-of-Mouth Marketing schedule I just wanted to give you a head's up that in April we'll begin to focus on Job Searching / Job Resources.

9. **Public Library Association (PLA) Conference:** I count myself lucky to be able to attend this conference this year. I hope you will let me know if you'll be at the conference. If you can't go and know there is a program you're interested in let me know and I'll do my best to get to it or see if one of your peers is going to get a report back to you!

2012 Legislative Priorities

Library Aid - Restore funding for library services to 2010 level of $84.78 million or at the very least receive same 4% increase as schools.

MTA Payroll Tax
This bill (S.6079 Martins/ A.8868 Abinanti) would add public libraries to list of entities exempt from MTA pay roll tax. *Status: reported to Senate Finance 1/31/12*

BOCES-Libraries Internet Partnerships
This bill (S.1573 Oppenheimer/A.464 Gunther) would authorize BOCES to contract with public libraries or library systems for internet services.

Library Card Info Distributed to Students
This bill (S.4174 Oppenheimer/A.8976 Reilly) would require school districts to disseminate informational materials about applications for public library cards to students if they are provided by their library.

Expand Eligibility for EPE Funding to Include Libraries
This bill (S.4100 Farley/A.6385 Reilly) would expand eligibility to receive Employment Preparation Education (EPE) funds to include libraries. There is currently $96 million in EPE funding available. *Status: reported to Senate Finance 1/24/12*

NYS Comprehensive Information System
The bill (S.3297 DeFrancisco/A.4997 Russell) would authorize the state library to coordinate the bulk purchase of electronic resources like databases for state agencies, libraries and other governmental entities that would save the state and local government's money. *Status: passed Senate 2/7/12*

Taxpayer Access to Publicly Funded Research
This bill (A.9162 Hevesi) would require publicly funded research that has been submitted for publication in peer-reviewed journals to be made available online by the state agencies that underwrite such research.

System Funding Flexibility
This bill (S. 6492 Farley/A.   Reilly) would give more local control to library systems on how to allocate reduced funding from the state to the meet the needs of the libraries and communities they serve.

Digital Literacy
This bill (S.6479 Farley/A.   Reilly) would allow schools to offer instruction in digital literacy in grades k-12. Digital literacy entails the skills needed to use technology, the internet and information in the 21st century.

2012 Talking Points

- Restore Library Aid to 2010 level of $84.78 million or at the very least receive the same 4% increase as schools
- Library Aid has been reduced 23% from $102 million in 2007 to $79 million in 2011.
- During the same time period, library usage has increased 11%.
- Library Aid funding is below 1994 levels and no other educational institutions are being funded at that level.
- Library circulation (number of materials borrowed) has increased 18% since 2004.
- Libraries like schools are educational institutions chartered by the Board of Regents and governed by Education Law.
- 71% of registered voters in New York agree that libraries deserve same increase in aid as schools according to January 2012 Siena Research Institute poll.
- 24% of registered voters had someone in their household use the resources at the library to apply for a job, search for a new career or improve their employment skills in the past year.
- According to the NYS Library, over the past three years 97% of public library budgets have been approved by their voters, showing New Yorkers overwhelming support funding for library services.
- Library Aid makes up less than 1/10 of 1% of the state budget, yet libraries serve 75% of the state's population.
- Each week, over 2.25 million people visit a library in New York State.
- One third of minority households do not have internet access at home and only 37% of households with less than $20,000 in income have home access and rely on libraries to bridge the digital divide.
- Providing digital literacy in our schools and public libraries is essential to remaining competitive and connected in a global economy.

Effective February 2, 2012: Disclosure of Records Scheduled for Discussion at Open Meetings
http://www.dos.ny.gov/coog/RecordsDiscussedatMeetings.html

Members of the public have on many occasions complained that they cannot fully understand discussions among members of public bodies, even though the discussions occur in public. For example, a board member might refer to the second paragraph of page 3 of a record without disclosing its content prior to the meeting. Although the public has the right to be present, the ability to understand or contribute to the decision-making process may be minimal and frustrating.

Effective February 2, 2012, a new section 103(e) is added to the Open Meetings Law. The purpose of the legislation is simple: those interested in the work of public bodies should have the ability, within reasonable limitations, to see the records scheduled to be discussed during open meetings prior to the meetings. The language of the amendment appears in the text of the Open Meetings Law.

The amendment addresses two types of records: first, those that are required to be made available pursuant to FOIL; and second, proposed resolutions, law, rules, regulations, policies or amendments thereto. When either is scheduled to be discussed during an open meeting, the law requires that they be made available to the public, to the extent practicable, either prior to or at the meeting.

To comply with the new provisions, copies of records must be made available to the public prior to or at the meeting for a reasonable fee, or by posting them online prior to the meeting. The amendment authorizes an agency to determine when and what may be "practicable" in making records available.

It is important to stress that the amendment involves an effort to take advantage of today's information technology to promote transparency and citizens' participation in government, and to reduce waste. If the agency in which a public body functions (i.e., a state department, a county, city, town, village or school district) "maintains a regularly and routinely updated website and utilizes a high speed internet connection," the records described above that are scheduled to be discussed in public "shall be posted on the website to the extent practicable as determined by the agency…"

Posting records online can reduce an agency's costs associated with requests made under FOIL. Staff does not have spend time retrieving paper records, photocopying the records, or carrying out the administrative tasks involved with charging fees for copies.
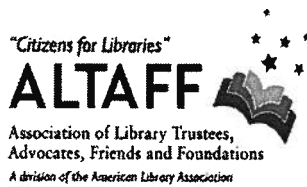
The phrase quoted twice in section 103(e), "to the extent practicable as determined by the agency", is intended to ensure that the amendment is implemented reasonably and without undue burden or cost to an agency. Many units of government are small and lack information technology resources or the knowledge or expertise to implement the new provision. If that is so, and they do not have the ability to give effect to the amendment with reasonable effort, they are not required to do so. In recognition of fiscal realities, the new

provision specifies that an agency "may, but shall not be required to, expend additional moneys to implement the provisions of this subdivision."

In the "News" section of this website [http://www.dos.ny.gov/coog/], there is a link to a report prepared for the Committee on Open Government that may be especially useful to governmental entities that have neither the resources nor the expertise to give effect to the amendment. Entitled "*Evaluating the Importance of Technology and the Role of Information Providers within Local Governments in New York*", the report offers guidance that may enable those entities to gain the knowledge and resources needed to do so at minimal cost.

It is emphasized that the potential obligation to make records available on request or online is limited to records that are "scheduled to be the subject of a discussion" during an open meeting. If there is a basis for conducting an executive session, a portion of a meeting that may be closed, records scheduled to be discussed during the executive session would not be required to be disclosed. Further, if, for example, a proposed policy offered by the head of an agency, a mayor, a town supervisor or a superintendent of schools was preceded by recommendations or opinions expressed by staff or members of a public body, those recommendations, opinions or similar materials fall outside the coverage of the amendment and (may but) need not be disclosed [see FOIL, section 87(2)(g)].

Through the disclosure of records scheduled to be discussed during open meetings, the public can gain the ability to better understand and appreciate the issues faced by government. Interested and civic-minded citizens can offer information and points of view that can assist in improving the operation of government to the benefit of our communities.

PUBLIC LIBRARY TRUSTEE
ETHICS STATEMENT

Official Statement from the Association of Library Trustees, Advocates, Friends and Foundations

Public library trustees are accountable for the resources of the library as well as to see that the library provides the best possible service to its community.

Every trustee makes a personal commitment to contribute the time and energy to faithfully carry out his/her duties and responsibilities effectively and with absolute truth, honor and integrity.

- Trustees shall respect the opinions of their colleagues and not be critical or disrespectful when they disagree or oppose a viewpoint different than their own.

- Trustees shall comply with all the laws, rules and regulations that apply to them and to their library.

- Trustees, in fulfilling their responsibilities, shall not be swayed by partisan interests, public pressure or fear of criticism.

- Trustees shall not engage in discrimination of any kind and shall uphold library patrons' rights to privacy in the use of library resources.

- Trustees must distinguish clearly in their actions and statements between their personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the library, acknowledging and supporting the formal position of the Board even if they disagree.

- Trustees must respect the confidential nature of library business and not disclose such information to anyone. Trustees must also be aware of and in compliance with Freedom of Information laws

- Trustees must avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained as a result of their position or access to privileged library information, for either themselves or others.

- A trustee shall immediately disqualify him/herself whenever the appearance of or a conflict of interest exists.

- Trustees shall not use their position to gain unwarranted privileges or advantages for themselves or others from the library or from those who do business with the library.

- Trustees shall not interfere with the management responsibilities of the director or the supervision of library staff.

- Trustees shall support the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals.

Signature_____Date_____

Approved by the ALTAFF Board in January 2012

Digital Literacy in New York
diglitny.org

DIGITAL LITERACY ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Digital Literacy Standards for New Yorkers
Revised Dec. 12, 2011

What is digital literacy? Literacy represents a person's ability to read, write, and solve problems using both spoken and written language. Digital literacy is the ability to apply those same skills using technology such as desktop computers, ebook readers and smartphones.

Why do people need to be digitally literate? Being digitally literate allows people to interact using the tools and technologies that are increasingly being used at home, in school and in business. For example, a digitally literate person can:

- Communicate with family, friends, coworkers, and prospective employers.
- Search for information including advice related to healthcare.
- Confidently engage in online banking and online shopping.
- Use technology to complete job applications and other online forms.
- Understand how information is accessed and transferred using various digital devices.

Digital Literacy Principles for New Yorkers

The following principles consist of higher level thinking and analysis skills to participate fully in a digital world.

Critical Thinking
Inquire, think critically and gain knowledge using technology. Use critical thinking skills to conduct research, solve problems and make informed decisions using appropriate digital tools and resources.

Creativity and Innovation
Demonstrate creative thinking; develop innovative products and processes using technology. Draw conclusions, make informed decisions, apply knowledge to using new technology concepts, and create new knowledge.

Communication and Collaboration
Use digital media and technology tools and environments to communicate and work collaboratively including at a distance.

Technology Usage for Personal Development
Develop an appreciation for ideas and the application of information in pursuit of personal growth. Demonstrate a sound understanding of technology concepts, systems and operations. Exhibit a positive attitude toward using technology in the practice of life-long learning.

Digital Citizenship and Ethics
Participate in the sharing of information using technology, understanding human, cultural and societal issues related to technology. Practice legal, ethical, and safe online behavior when using technology.

NYLA
NEW YORK LIBRARY ASSOCIATION
The Voice of the Library Community